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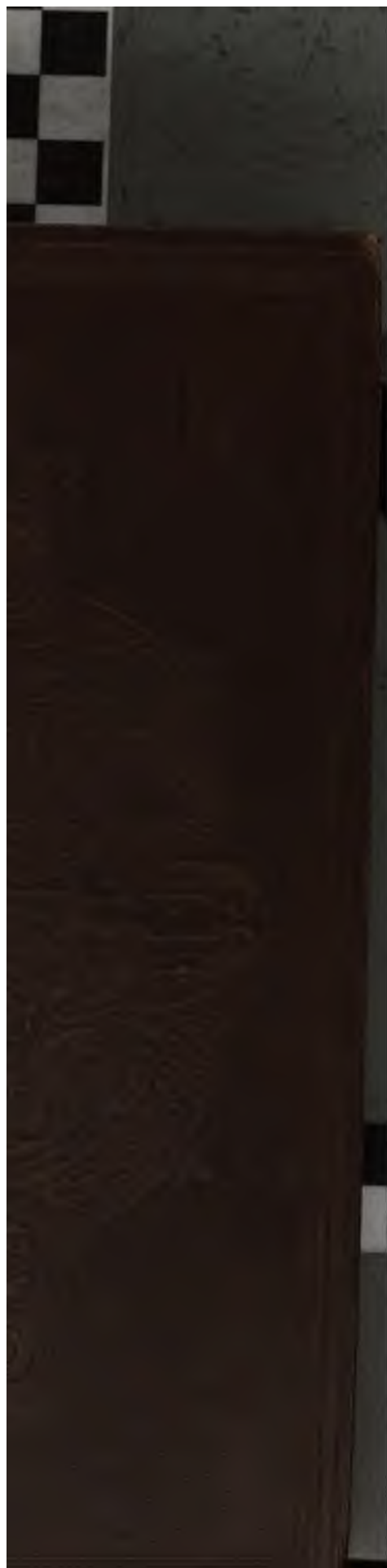
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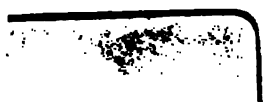
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**COURSE OF THE HISTORY**

**OF**

**MODERN PHILOSOPHY.**

**BY M. VICTOR COUSIN.**

**TRANSLATED BY O. W. WIGHT.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL. I.**

**NEW YORK:**  
**D. APPLETON & COMPANY, 200 BROADWAY.**

**M DCCC LII.**

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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M. COUSIN'S "Course of the History of Modern Philosophy" is here, for the first time entire, presented to the English reader. It consists of Lectures delivered at Paris in the years 1828-9. "The delivery of these Lectures," says Sir Wm. Hamilton,\* speaking of the first volume, "excited an unexampled sensation in Paris. Condemned to silence during the reign of Jesuit ascendancy, M. Cousin, after eight years of honorable retirement, had ascended again the chair of philosophy; and the splendor with which he recommenced his academical career, more than justified the expectation which his recent reputation as a writer, and the memory of his earlier lectures, had inspired. Two thousand auditors listened, in admiration, to the eloquent exposition of doctrines unintelligible to the many, and the oral discussion of philosophy awakened in Paris, and in France, an interest unexampled since the days of Abelard. The daily journals found it necessary to gratify, by their earlier analyses, the impatient curiosity of the public; and the Lectures themselves, taken in shorthand, and corrected by the Professor, propagated weekly the influence of his instruction to the remotest provinces of the kingdom." These remarks of the noble Edinburgh Professor, which contain no exaggeration, might be extended, with equal propriety, to the other two volumes.

It is not expected that, at present, a like interest for philosophy can be awakened on this side of the ocean, for the American mind is still flowing, for the most part, in utilitarian channels; yet there are many earnest thinkers among us who are determined to

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\* Edinburgh Review, October, 1829, p. 194.

fathom every system, who mean that the United States shall excel all other nations in sound speculation, in scholarship, in literature, as well as in political institutions, commerce, and the useful arts. To the young men of America, who are certainly not behind the young men of France in spirit and energy of thought, this translation is intrusted. A work of extraordinary merit and beauty can be appreciated here as well as in Europe.

This second series of Lectures contains a full exposition of Cousin's system. It is, in fact, his great philosophical work, and has received his last revision and correction. Whoever, either for the purpose of propagating it or resisting its influence, wishes to make himself acquainted with Eclecticism, which is fast becoming the dominant philosophy of the nineteenth century, will do well to study this production of its founder and ablest teacher. The first volume contains a luminous summary of Cousin's views in regard to humanity and history. The course which comprises the two last volumes of this series, "will," to use the language of **Mr. Morell**,\* "in all probability, be ever the most popular of his writings. The connected account which it gives of the history of philosophy from the earliest times; the distinct classification it makes of systems; the brief, yet intelligible, glimpses it affords into the interior of almost every school, whether ancient or modern, together with the detailed analysis of Locke, in which is said almost all that ever need be said about the 'Essay on the Human Understanding;' in a word, the singular union of the more sober criticism of the psychological school, with occasional flights into the higher regions of metaphysical analysis, all concur to secure for the course of 1829 an interest and a value peculiarly its own." In order to understand the system of the "greatest Philosopher of France," it is, at least, necessary to study the whole of these three volumes.

As a fine writer, Cousin has perhaps never been surpassed. Those who love elegance of composition, will find in his works

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\* *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1851, p. 228.

every thing to gratify a refined taste. "Of all nations in the world, the French are among the greatest masters of prose ; and of all their prose writers, scarcely any one can be said to excel Cousin in power of expression and perfect finish of style."\*

It is hardly necessary to repeat here what has often been observed, and what every one, who has made the attempt, knows, that it is very difficult to translate accurately from so flexible a language as the French into English. The constant aim of the translator has been to give no more, no less, than the thought of Cousin. The style of the original, so far as the peculiarities of the two languages would permit, has been followed. How far successful these efforts may have been, is left for those to say who are qualified to judge.

The translator gladly embraces this opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness to F. W. Ricord (Librarian of the "Library Association," Newark, N. J.), who joins to a critical knowledge of his native language a thorough understanding of the English ; who has assisted in comparing the translation now offered, sentence by sentence, with the original ; who, in fact, has in every way been a fellow-laborer.

O. W. WIGHT.

NEW YORK, September 8, 1851.

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\* Morell.





INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY.

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LECTURE I.  
IDEA OF PHILOSOPHY.

Subject of the first lecture :—That philosophy is a special want and a necessary product of the human mind.—Enumeration of the fundamental wants of the human mind, of the general ideas which govern its activity : 1st, Idea of the useful, mathematical, and physical sciences, industry, political economy : 2d, Idea of the just, civil society, the State, jurisprudence : 3d, Idea of the beautiful, art : 4th, The idea of God, religion, worship : 5th, Of reflection, as the foundation of philosophy.—Philosophy, the last development of thought.—Its true character in the nineteenth century.

GENTLEMEN :—

I cannot suppress my deep emotion in finding myself again in this chair, to which, in 1815, I was called by the choice of my illustrious master and friend, M. Royer-Collard. The first strokes of a power which no longer exists drove me hence : I am happy and proud to reappear to-day, with the return of the constitutional hopes of France (applause) ; and my gratitude and loyalty constrain me to thank publicly my country, the king, and the new administration. (Applause.)

A separation of eight years from the public has deprived me of my wonted ease in the presence of assemblages like this before me. Accustomed in my retirement to those forms of thought which, though well enough adapted to private study, are not proper for the instruction of others, I fear that for want of expressions suitable to a numerous audience, I shall bring to this chair the mere soliloquies of a hermit. It is indeed but recently

that I have been aware that I should appear before you : no preparation, therefore, accompanies and sustains me. Prudence counselled me to defer the commencement of these lectures, and to labor to render them for the coming year less unworthy of your attention. These were, however, but selfish considerations which I have determined to abandon, that I may think only of the performance of duty : and I have regarded as a duty, as soon as permission was given me, to make use of it to renew the interrupted course of the Lectures of the Normal School ; to reappear upon the theatre of my first labors, and there to rally those who still hold me in remembrance ; and to come here, too, at the expense of my vanity and personal feelings to serve the cause of philosophy. Instead of consulting my strength, I trust to my well-known intentions and to your former indulgence. I bring back to you the same professor, the same instruction, the same principles, the same zeal. May I find in you the same confidence. In casting my eyes around me, I must in justice to myself say, that in the midst of the agitations of our times, that amidst the various turns of political events to which I have been subjected, my wishes have never passed beyond these walls. Devoted entirely to philosophy, after having had the honor to suffer a little in its service, I come to consecrate to it, unreservedly, all that remains to me of strength and of life.

I propose, the ensuing year, to introduce you into Greece, and to make you acquainted with that admirable philosophy to which Plato gave his name, and which at once recalls all that is most profound in thought and most pleasing in imagination. But can any system of philosophy whatever be understood if considered by itself alone ? Does one understand it when ignorant of the consequences which must inevitably follow—consequences unknown, indeed, to its very author ? Can we be said to be acquainted with that of which we do not even know the origin ? Plato, for example, cannot be understood without his successors, the Neoplatonists ; and as little can he be understood without his predecessors, Socrates and Anaxagoras. If, then, I wish to make

you comprehend somewhat profoundly the Platonic philosophy, it is necessary that I should show you its relations with the general epoch of the history of philosophy to which it belongs. Now, that which is true of a system is equally true of the different epochs of the history of philosophy. In order to understand one of them, it is necessary to become acquainted with almost all. I deem it, then, indispensable to present to you, during the short time that remains to us before our next vacation, a general review of the different epochs of the history of philosophy, as an introduction to the complete exposition of the Platonic philosophy with its antecedents and consequents. I shall doubtless glance but lightly over all, but nothing, I hope, will remain unnoticed. It will be necessary, at first, to sketch the frame-work, leaving the picture to be completed at a later period. By this plan I shall, moreover, be able to unfold more advantageously my own opinions. All the problems which human thought can suggest, having been successively taken up by different ages and different schools, will thus be brought to this chair. From the heights of science and history, then, the public, who have now forgotten me, and who wish in the first place to know where I intend to conduct them, will see more clearly my aim, my designs, and, thus to speak, that star of philosophy which must serve as a light and a guide in the great career which we must run together. Then for the next year we will consider Plato and Greece; for this year, humanity in its integrity, and the general history of philosophy.

But do you perceive that I am reasoning upon an hypothesis which many, perhaps, will not admit? Is philosophy the legitimate daughter of human reason, or is it only a series of chimeras originating in the dreams of men of genius, and propagated and maintained by the authority of their example? Does it belong to Plato and Aristotle alone, or is it the property of the human intellect? Is it only a caprice, an extravagance of thought, or does it really possess a foundation in that nature which is common to us all, and consequently has it a rank in the catalogue of

human sciences, making its history a serious thing? This is a point that must be settled before all others; and an examination of this preliminary question will make the special subject of this lecture. Let us decide in the first place what it is that has brought us here together. Is it upon your part a vain curiosity? Is it upon mine the simple force of habit? Or are we here uniting our efforts, not for the purpose of tormenting ourselves more or less ingeniously with idle fancies, but in order to satisfy a want more elevated, but as real as any other—a want inherent in the constitution of humanity?

As soon as man has a consciousness of his being, he finds himself in a world strange and hostile, whose laws and phenomena seem in direct opposition to his own existence. For the purpose of self-defence he is endowed with intelligence and liberty. He defends himself, he lives, he breathes—though it be but two minutes in succession—only on condition of foreseeing, that is, on condition of having known these laws and these phenomena which would destroy his frail existence if he learned not little by little to observe them, to measure their influence, and to calculate upon their recurrence. By his intelligence he obtains knowledge of this world; by means of his liberty he modifies it, he changes it, he adapts it to his use; he arrests the spreading deserts, turns aside the rivers, and levels the mountains; in a word, he accomplishes in a succession of ages that series of prodigies which now so little astonishes us, because we are habituated to our power and to its effects. He who first measured the space which surrounded him, counted the objects which presented themselves to him, and observed their properties and their action, he it was who gave birth to the mathematical and physical sciences. He who modified in the least degree that which was an obstacle in his path, he it was who created industry. Multiply ages, cultivate this feeble plant by the accumulated labors of generations, and you will have all that you have to-day. The mathematical and physical sciences are a conquest of human intelligence over the secrets of nature.

Industry is a conquest of liberty over the forces of this same nature. The world, such as man found it, was a stranger to him; the world, such as the mathematical and physical sciences, together with industry, have made it, is a world resembling man, reconstructed by him in his own image. In fact, look around you, and you will perceive everywhere the impression of intelligence and human liberty. Nature had only made things, that is, beings without value; man, in giving to them the form of his own personality, has elevated them into images of liberty and intelligence, and in this way communicated to them a part of the value which belongs to himself.\* The primitive world is nothing more than material for the labor of man; and it is labor that has given to this matter the value which it possesses. The destiny of man (I mean in his relations with the world) is to assimilate nature as much as possible to himself, to plant in it, and in it to make appear, unceasingly, the liberty and intelligence with which he is endowed. Industry, I repeat it with pleasure, is the triumph of man over nature, whose tendency was to encroach upon and destroy him, but which retreats before him, and is metamorphosed in his hands: this is truly nothing less than the creation of a new world by man. Political economy explains the secret, or rather the detail, of all this: it follows the achievements of industry, which are themselves connected with those of the mathematical and physical sciences.

I hope that I shall not be accused of injustice towards the mathematical and physical sciences, towards industry and political economy. I would simply demand whether there are no other sciences than mathematics and physics, whether there is no other power than that of industry, whether political economy exhausts all our intellectual capacity. Mathematics and physics, industry and political economy, have one and the same object, the useful. The question is then changed into this,—Is the use-

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\* In regard to the true foundation of the idea of value, see 1st Series, 2d Vol., Lecture 20, page 304; and 4th Vol., Lectures 17 and 18, On Smith, page 288.

ful the only want of our nature, the only idea upon which all the ideas of the understanding can be concentrated, the only view under which man considers all things, the only characteristic which he recognizes in them? No: it is a fact that, among all human actions, there are some that, besides their character of useful or hurtful, present still another, that of being just or unjust; a new character, indeed, but real and as certain as the first, and quite as worthy, too, of admiration.

The idea of the just is one of the glories of human nature. Man perceives it at first, but he perceives it only as a flash of lightning in the profound darkness of the primitive passions; he sees it continually violated by the disorder of passions and conflicting interests. That which he has been pleased to call a state of nature is only a state of war, where the right of the strongest rules, and where the idea of justice interposes only to be trampled under foot by passion. But at last this idea strikes also the mind of man, and it corresponds so well with what is most deeply planted within him, that little by little it becomes an imperious necessity of his nature to realize it; and, as before he had formed a new nature upon the idea of the useful, so now, in the place of primitive society, where all was confounded, he creates a new society on the basis of a new idea, that of justice. Justice constituted, is the State. The business of the State is to cause justice to be respected by force, upon the authority of this idea inherent in that of justice, viz., that injustice must not only be restrained, but punished.\* The State does not take into consideration the infinite variety of human elements that were at variance in the confusion and chaos of natural society. It does not embrace the whole man; it regards him only in his relation to the idea of the just and the unjust; that is, as capable of committing or receiving an injustice, or rather, as capable of being impeded or impeding others, either by fraud or violence, in

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\* On the idea of pain, see 1st Series, 2d Vol., Lecture 17, page 219; Lecture 20, page 306; Lectures 21 and 22, page 341.

the exercise of free and voluntary agency. Thence arise all duties and all legal rights. The only legal right is that of being respected in the peaceful exercise of liberty; the only duty, or at least the first of all, is to respect the liberty of others. \* Justice is nothing more than this; justice is the maintenance of reciprocal liberty. The State does not restrain liberty, as some aver; it develops and secures it. Besides, in primitive society, all men are necessarily unequal, by reason of their wants, their sentiments, their physical, intellectual, and moral faculties; but before the State, which considers men only as persons, as free beings, all men are equal, liberty being equal to itself, and forming the only type, the only measure of equality, which without liberty, is only a resemblance, that is, a diversity.† Equality is then, with liberty, the basis of legal order and of this political world, a creation of the genius of man, more wonderful still than the actual world of industry compared with the primitive world of nature.

But, indeed, human intelligence goes still further than all this. It is again an incontestable fact, that in the infinite variety of exterior objects and human acts, there are some that appear to us not only as useful or hurtful, as just or unjust, but as beautiful or ugly. The idea of the beautiful‡ is as inherent in the human spirit as that of the useful or that of the just. Question yourself before a vast and tranquil sea, before mountains with harmonious contours, before the noble or graceful face of man or woman, or when in contemplation of some trait of heroic devotion. Once struck with the idea of the beautiful, man seizes upon it, disengages it, extends it, purifies it in his thought; by the aid of this idea which exterior objects have suggested, he examines anew these same objects, and finds them, upon second view, in-

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\* On the idea of justice, 1st Series, Vol. 2d, Lectures 21 and 22, page 337; and Vol. 3d, Lecture on Hobbes.

† On the idea of equality, see 1st Series, Vol. 2d, Lecture 18, page 244.

‡ 1st Series, Vol. 2d, 2d Part, *Of the Beautiful*, p. 121, and Vol. 4th, Lecture 13, *Æsthetics of Hutcheson*; and Lecture 23, *Æsthetics of Reid*.

only as fugitive lights in the chaos of p  
world of forms beauty is shown only :  
vealing it to us, veils and disfigures it.  
cal, incomplete image of the infinite  
mountain, that is, a great volume of v  
The most beautiful object in the world  
charming face has its defects. How  
connect beauty with matter ! Heroism  
purest of all beauties, heroism closely v  
All that is real is mixed and imperfect.  
ever it may be, fades before the ideal  
veals. What does man do then ? What  
After having renewed nature and primit  
and laws, he reconstructs the objects wh  
idea of beauty upon this idea itself, and i  
beautiful. Instead of stopping at the st  
the ideal, he creates for this ideal a new  
beauty in a manner much more transpar  
ture. The beauty of art\* is as much super  
as man is superior to nature. And it sho  
this beauty is a mere chimera, for the high  
and that which reflects thought best is th  
and the works of art are thus in some c  
those of nature. The world of art is quite  
world or the world of industry. Like ther  
intelligence and liberty



the earth as it passed from the hands of nature, and who should now return in the midst of the prodigies of our industry, of our institutions, and of our arts. Not being able to recognize the ancient dwelling-place of man, would it not seem to him, in his astonishment, that a superior race of beings had passed upon the earth and metamorphosed it?

But, indeed, this world thus metamorphosed by the power of man, this nature which he has reconstructed in his image, this society which he has established upon the rule of justice, these marvels of art with which he has enchanted life, are not sufficient for man. All-powerful as he is, he conceives a power superior to his own and to that of nature, a power which without doubt manifests itself only by its works, that is, by nature and humanity, a power that is contemplated only in its works, which is conceived only in relation with its works, and then too, under the reservation of infinite superiority and omnipotence. Chained within the limits of this world, man sees nothing except through this world and under the forms of this world; but through these forms, and under these forms themselves, he supposes, irresistibly, something which is for him the substance, the cause, and the model of all the powers and the perfections which he sees both in himself and in the world. In a word, beyond the world of industry, beyond the political world and that of art, man conceives God. The God of humanity is no more separated from the world than he is concentrated in it.\* A God without a world is for man as if he were not; a world without a God is an incomprehensible enigma to his thought, and an overwhelming weight upon his heart.

The intuitive perception of God, distinct in himself from the world, but there making himself manifest, is natural religion. But as man stopped not at the primitive world, at primitive soci-

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 2d, Lectures 9th and 10th, *Of Mysticism*, and Lecture 24th, Recapitulation, page 392. "I can conceive God only in his manifestations, and by the signs which he gives of his existence."

ety, or at natural beauties, so he stops not at natural religion. In fact, natural religion, that is, the instinctive thought which darts through the world, even to God, is in the life of the natural man but a beam of light marvellous, but fugitive. This light illumines his soul as does the idea of the beautiful, the idea of the just, the idea of the useful. But in this world every thing tends to obscure, to distract, to mislead the religious sentiment. Here, then, man does what he has done before—he creates, for the use of the new idea which governs him, another world than that of nature; a world in which, abstracting every thing else, he perceives only its divine character, that is, its relation to God. The world of religion is worship. Truly, that religious sentiment is very feeble that would stop at an occasional, vague, and sterile contemplation. It belongs to the essence of all that is strong to develop itself, to realize itself. Worship, then, is the development, the realization of the religious sentiment, not its limitation.\* Worship is to natural religion what art is to natural beauty, what the State is to primitive society, what the world of industry is to that of nature. The triumph of the religious sentiment is in the creation of worship, as the triumph of the idea of the beautiful is in the creation of art, as that of the idea of the just is in the creation of the State. Worship is infinitely superior to the ordinary world, in that, 1st, it has no other object than to recall God to man, whilst that external nature, besides its relation to God, has many others which distract feeble humanity unceasingly from this: 2d, because it is infinitely more clear as a representation of divine things: 3d, because it is permanent, whilst to our wandering eyes the divine character of the world is

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 23, p. 364. "Adoration abandoned to itself would easily degenerate into dreams and ecstasies, or would be dissipated in the torrent of the affairs and wants of each day. The more energetic it is, the more it tends to express itself outwardly by acts which realize it, to take a sensible, precise, and regular form, which by a just return reacting upon the feeling which has produced it, awakens it when it slumbers, supports it when it fails, and protects it also against extravagancies of every kind, which it may originate in imaginations weak and unbridled."

at every moment enfeebled or totally eclipsed. Worship, by reason of being specific, clear, and permanent, recalls man to God a thousand times more forcibly than the world can do. It is a victory over vulgar life higher still than that of industry, of the State, and of art.

But on what condition does worship effectually recall man to his Creator? On the condition, inherent to all worship, of presenting these obscure relations of humanity and the world to God under exterior forms—under lively images and symbols. Reaching this point, humanity has, doubtless, very far advanced; but has it arrived at a limit beyond which it cannot go? All truth, by which I mean all the relations of man and of the world to God, are deposited, I believe, in the sacred symbols of religion. But can thought stop at symbols? Faith attaches itself to symbols; its grandeur and its strength consist in seeing in them what does not exist, or, at least, what exists there only in an indirect and distorted manner. But this cannot be the last degree of the development of human intelligence. In presence of the symbol, man, after having adored it, feels the need of accounting to himself for so doing. Accounting to himself, gentlemen, accounting to himself! These are truly serious words. On what condition, in fact, does he account to himself? On the condition of analyzing that for which he wishes to account, and of transforming it into conceptions which the mind afterwards examines, and upon the truth or falsehood of which it decides. Faith is the work of enthusiasm; but to enthusiasm succeeds reflection. If enthusiasm and faith have poetry for their language, and breathe themselves forth in hymns, reflection has dialectics for its instrument; and thus we find ourselves in quite a different world from that of symbols and of worship. The day on which man first reflected was the birth-day of philosophy. Philosophy is nothing else than reflection in a vast form; reflection accompanied by all the retinue of processes belonging to it, reflection elevated to the rank and authority of a method. Philosophy is little else than a method; there is perhaps no truth which belongs

... they are developed, a peculiar property of possessing an immediate and of needing nothing to make them intelligible. In some cases it may be necessary to pre-arrange the order, but their combinations change not; they have different degrees, but in their lowest degree, they always preserve their characteristic forms of thought, that is, thought comprehensible to itself. Now thought is understood as at bottom it comprehends itself alone. It is not that which it comprehended in the different spheres, but just run over; but it comprehended itself under a form more or less different; it perceived itself under a form more or less different. It comprehends itself well only in taking itself as it is in itself.

Arrived there, thought has reached its ultimate limit. Can it pass beyond itself? It cannot, then, pass beyond the limit which we have just laid down, but it aspires to seize itself, to study itself under its own form. As it has not accomplished this, its development is not complete. Philosophy is the complete development of thought. There are bad as well as good systems of philosophy. There are extravagant modes of worship, defective systems of States, poor industrial systems, and defective systems of physics. But philosophy, like religion, art, and the sciences, is not less a special and real standing.

that here thought can mount so high that it perceives naught else than itself, its principle or its analogy, everywhere and continually.

Ideas, these are the proper objects of philosophy; in them philosophy has its world. Do not for a moment believe that ideas are the representatives of other things, and that it is on account of their resemblance with what they are destined to represent, that we give them credit. Ideas, as has been shown,\* represent nothing, absolutely nothing, except themselves. Ideas have but one character, viz., that of being intelligible: I add, that there is nothing intelligible but ideas; that they alone, often unknown to us, under such or such a form, gain our assent. Philosophy is the worship of ideas; it is the last victory of thought over every foreign form and element; it is the highest degree of liberty and intelligence. Industry was already an enfranchisement from nature, the State a still greater one, art a new progress, religion a progress still more sublime; philosophy is the last enfranchisement, the last progress of thought.

Try, indeed, to derange the order in which I have successively presented to you the different spheres over which we have run: it is impossible for you to do it. Without industry, without security against the exterior world, without the State, without the subjection of the passions to the yoke of law, all regular exercise of thought is absolutely impossible. It cannot be that reflection preceded enthusiasm, and that philosophy went before, was anterior to art. The artist should not possess its secret; he becomes a philosopher only in ceasing to be an artist. It is the same with religion: in its holy images, in its august teachings, it contains every truth: not one is wanting; but all are there under a mysterious twilight. It is by faith that religion attaches itself to its objects; it is faith that it inspires; it is to faith that it addresses itself; it is this

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 1st, Lectures 8, 9, and 10; Vol. 8d, Lecture 1st, *Locke*, p. 68; Vol. 4th, Lecture 20, p. 356, and Lecture 21, p. 417; 2d Series, Vol. 8d, Lectures 21, 22, and 23.

#### HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

faith that it wishes to obtain from humanity; and, in  
is a merit: it is a virtue in humanity to be able to believe  
sees not in what it sees. But analysis and dialectics  
not precede symbols and mysteries. The rational form is  
rily the last of all.

form is also the most clear. Without doubt ideas are  
to the senses, to the imagination, and to the soul: the  
see only the exterior objects upon which they fasten them-  
the imagination has need of representations, the soul of  
nts. Evidence is in the reason only. Philosophy is then  
at of all lights, the authority of all authorities.\* Those  
h to impose upon philosophy and upon thought a foreign  
y, do not think that of two things one must be true:  
hought does not comprehend this authority, and then this  
y is for it as if it were not; or it does comprehend it,  
f it an idea, accepts it for this reason, and thereby takes  
r measure, for rule, for highest authority.

having thus proclaimed the supremacy of philosophy,  
en to add that it is essentially tolerant. In fact, philoso-  
he understanding and the explanation of all things. Of

what, then, aside from error and crime, can it be the enemy? Philosophy does not combat industry, but comprehends it and refers it to principles which govern those that industry and political economy avow. Philosophy does not combat jurisprudence, but makes it the spirit of the laws. Philosophy does not cut from art its divine wings, but follows it in its flight, measures its reach and its aim. Sister of religion, it draws, from an intimate connection with her, powerful inspirations, it makes use of her sacred images, her great teachings, but at the same time it converts the truths offered to it by religion into its own substance, and into its own form: it destroys not faith; it illuminates it and promotes its growth, and raises it gently from the twilight of the symbol to the full light of pure thought.

All the wants which we have passed in review are equally specific, equally certain, equally necessary; and, reunited, they form a whole which is in some sort the entire soul of humanity. But the strength of each one of these wants is the tendency of each to realize itself separately; and they do it. Ordinarily, too ordinarily, philosophy, religion, art, the State, industry, are at variance. Far from that, true philosophy is not exclusive: it ought, on the contrary, to comprehend and draw all together. I hope that from this chair will never fall words that are hostile to whatever may be beautiful and good. It is time that philosophy, instead of forming a division in the human race, should rise above all divisions. This shall be the spirit of my teaching. This is the new character that French philosophy ought to receive at the hands of the civilization of the nineteenth century.

Young men, you who propose to frequent these lectures, love all that is good, all that is beautiful, all that is honest: here is the basis of all philosophy. Philosophy, in adding itself to them will give them its form: it will destroy nothing. Follow with interest the general movement of the physical sciences and of industry. Give to yourselves, in them, the instructive spectacle of liberty and of human intelligence, marching day by day to the conquest and dominion of the sensible world. Study the

laws of our great country: imbibe in this study, with the love of these glorious laws, that of the princes who have given them to us, and who maintain them. Imbibe at the source of art and letters, the enthusiasm of all that is beautiful. Nourished in the bosom of Christianity, prepared by its noble teachings for philosophy, having arrived thus at the summit of your studies, you will find in true philosophy, with the understanding and the explanation of all things, a supreme and unalterable peace. To exclude nothing, to accept every thing, to comprehend every thing, once more, is the characteristic of our times: let this also be the character of the French youth. I will try not to be an unfaithful master to them.



## LECTURE II.

## PERPETUITY OF PHILOSOPHY.

Subject of this lecture: Verification by history of the results obtained by psychology.—Has philosophy had an historical existence, and what has this existence been?—1st, The East.—Birth of philosophy. 2d, Greece and Rome.—Development of philosophy.—Socrates. 3d, Middle age.—Scholasticism. 4th, Modern philosophy.—Descartes. 5th, Actual condition of philosophy.—View of the future.—Conclusion: That philosophy has not been wanting to any epoch of humanity; that its importance has increased from epoch to epoch; and that its tendency is to become, without ceasing, a more considerable portion of history.

In my last lecture, I endeavored to vindicate philosophy: I showed that philosophy is not the dream of particular men, but the necessary development of a fundamental need of human nature. I reviewed all the general ideas which govern humanity—the idea of the useful, the idea of the just, the idea of the beautiful, the idea of the divine; and beyond these I found yet the idea of the true, of the true in itself, in its highest degree, under its purest form—that which thought, in its freest flight, is not able to pass beyond, because this form is precisely the essential and adequate form of thought. I proved, 1st, that these different ideas are facts which are attested by the authority of consciousness, and which, therefore, can be regarded as real elements of human nature; 2d, that there are no other elements, and that these exhaust the capacity of human nature; 3d, that there are no less, that is, that they are simple, indecomposable, irreducible into each other; 4th, that if they are not contemporaneous one with another, yet once formed, they coexist without power of destroying each other, and constitute the eternal foundation of humanity; 5th, that in the order of their development, the philosophical element necessarily comes last; 6th, that the philosophical element is superior to all the others: superior, because,

under its apparent obscurity, it conceals all true light ; because, specific as it is, it extends itself to all others, and in embracing them it explains them, without the power of being explained by any of them, without the power of being explained by any other thing than by itself.

Such are the results which a rapid examination of human nature has given us. In order to obtain these results, what have we done ? We have observed, described, counted the real facts which we have found in the soul, neither omitting nor supposing any ; then we have observed their relations, their relations of resemblance and dissimilitude ; finally, we have classed them by aid of these relations. This is analysis applied to the soul ; that is, in a word, psychological analysis. The results which we owe to it cannot be contested ; but have they all the evidence desirable ? The psychological method has already taken an elevated and dominant rank in science, and will each day take one more elevated and dominant ; but to this method is it not possible to add another, not more certain, but more luminous ?

What is psychological analysis ? It is the attentive observation of facts which constitute human nature. These facts are complicated, fugitive, obscure, scarcely apprehensible by their very intimacy ; the consciousness which is applied to them is an instrument of extreme delicacy : it is a microscope applied to things infinitely small. But if human nature manifests itself in the individual, it manifests itself also in the race. And what is there in the race, except the elements which are in the individual, with this difference, that they are there developed on a greater scale, and that consequently they are there more visible ? The development of the human race in space and time, is history. I say development, for there is no history of that which does not develop itself. And what is the idea implied in that of development ? The idea of progress. All history supposes hence a development, a march, a progress. What is, therefore, the progressive development of the human race in history ? Civilization. As many elements as there are in human nature, as many

as there are in the race, so many history and civilization develop. It is wrong (and it has been said here\* much better than I can say it again), it is wrong that civilization should be characterized from such or such a particular point of view. To ascribe to it a character taken from an exclusive point of view, whatever it may be, is to wish that civilization may not reflect all of humanity : or, to act consistently, it is nothing less than to mutilate one of the sides of human nature. The unity of civilization is in the unity of human nature ; its varieties, in the variety of the elements of humanity. All that is in human nature passes into the movement of civilization : I say all that is fundamental ; for it is the excellence of history to take out and throw away all that is not necessary and essential. It belongs only to the true to subsist, and to leave of itself a lasting memorial. That which is individual shines for a day, and is extinguished forever, or stops at biography. Nothing endures, except that which is necessary : and history occupies itself only with that which endures ; with that which, while enduring, organizes itself, develops itself, and arrives at an historical existence. Therefore, as human nature is the matter and the base of history, history is, so to speak, the judge of human nature, and historical analysis is the counter-proof of psychological analysis. For example, if by psychological analysis you had found a human element in the individual consciousness which you could not also find in history, that is, which had not been developed by the entire race during two, three, four thousand years, I should advise you strongly to doubt the reality of that element : or if you should find in history an element which psychological analysis had not given you, I should advise you to commence that analysis again. In a word, history is the representation on a great scale of human nature, and that which is scarcely perceptible in consciousness shines forth in history in brilliant characters.

After having interrogated the one, I come to interrogate the

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\* M. Guizot, *History of Civilization*, first Lecture.

other. I have shown, at first, that philosophy has a real and incontestable existence in consciousness : I come to-day to examine whether philosophy has had an historical existence ; for if philosophy has not yet been, after three or four thousand years, it runs the risk of never being. But if we find that in history philosophy has always had an existence like the other elements of human nature ; if it is developed there exactly in the same manner as in consciousness ; if it sustains there with the other elements of civilization, the same relation which we have seen that it sustains with the other elements of consciousness, then we shall be certain that we are not examining chimeras, we shall feel ourselves in our advances upon solid ground : we shall have for our support the interior and the exterior facts, and absolute truth is in the harmony of these two orders of verities.

Let us inquire, then, if, up to this time, philosophy has had an historical existence, and what this existence has been.

Do not expect that I shall exhibit here a picture of civilization ; I only wish to know if in one corner of this picture I shall not find philosophy : I consider civilization only in this point of view. But where am I to commence ? I shall permit myself to commence history by history. Usually history is commenced by hypotheses : the history of religions or of societies, for example, is sought in the savage state, in those states which historical criticism is not able to reach ; it is in this darkness, anterior to all history, that the light is sought which is to illuminate the real history of civilization. I shall do otherwise ; I shall start from that which is, to go to that which was before it, to go finally to that which was at first, and beyond which history and criticism would not furnish us a single monument. Thus, whence comes modern history ? It is clear that it has something before it, and I need not insist upon showing that its real and well-known roots are in the Greek and Roman world : all evidences testify to this parentage. And does not this world of classic antiquity presuppose an anterior world ? Is it not evident that before the Greek and Roman world, there was yet a world which humanity trav-

ersed before arriving at Greece and Rome? It is known that, if the roots of the modern world are in classic antiquity, those of classic antiquity are on the coasts of Egypt, in the plains of Persia, and upon the heights of Asia; it is evident, in a word, that the East has preceded Greece. Evidences carry us thus far: do they carry us farther? And who of us has any secret memoirs in regard to that which was before the East? From that, then, it is necessary to start. Well! has there been or has there not been any philosophy in the East?

The Oriental world is vast; it embraces many different parts which must not be confounded; but, finally, all these diversities have their harmony; and the East, taken in mass, has its fundamental character: this character is unity. All the elements of human nature are in the East, but indistinct, enveloped in one another. The state of the envelopment of all the parts of human nature is the character of the East. It is that of the infancy of the individual: it is also that of the infancy of the human race. In fact, neither industry nor art have been wanting in the East. Witness here Babylon and Persepolis; there, not only the pyramids, but the temples of Upper Egypt; finally, all the gigantic monuments of India. Laws have not there been more wanting; they have been so little wanting to the human race in the East, that under their empire the human race has scarcely moved. The idea of religion is, as it were, the idea itself of the East; art, the State, industry, every thing has been formed around religion, for religion, by religion. Also examine the arts of the East; you will never find in them an individual aim or character. The State is an avowed theocracy: all civil and political laws are at the same time religious laws; and industry is so much at the service, or under the domination of religion, that codes, at once political and religious, trace for it in advance, both its processes and its limits.

In such a world as that, what existence could philosophy have? It would naturally submit to the common condition, be enveloped in the other elements which we have designated, and, particularly,

in that one of these elements which ruled all the others, that is, the religious element.

Philosophy in the East, generally speaking, has been the reflection of religion.\* It need not be said that, in Egypt and in Persia, philosophy has not had an independent existence. These two great countries have left more sculptured than written monuments; a certain testimony of the degree of civilization at which they had arrived, and of the strict dependence upon its exterior form, in which thought was there still held. In India, it is true, more independence was manifested. Nevertheless, the whole Indian philosophy appears to me only an interpretation, more or less free, of the religious books of India. It is avowed at the present day that all the Indian philosophical systems are divided into two great classes—the orthodox systems, and the heterodox systems; always in advance of philosophy were the Vedas, the source and foundation of all truth, and the human spirit had scarcely any other ambition than that of understanding them more or less exactly. Later, without doubt, after the Buddhist reform, and particularly in China, philosophy was much more detached from religion. China seems like a world apart in the East. But as the monuments of Buddhism, both Indian and Chinese, are yet little known in Europe, or, at least, as they are not in circulation among the masses, and among philosophers, while expecting that M. Abel Remusat† may publish his great work on the history of the Buddhist religion and philosophy, I am forced to confine myself to the data which are in my hands; and these data, scrupulously examined, appear to me to manifest, in general, a symbolic and religious character, under which I recognize a commencement of philosophy.

If, in the Oriental world, the condition of the existence of all the elements of human nature was their envelopment, philosophy ought to have been subject to this same condition; and at the

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\* In regard to philosophy in the East, see Vol. 2d of this 2d Series, Lectures 5 and 6.

† See Vol. 2d of this 2d Series, Lectures 5 and 6.

same time, as human nature was there entire, and as philosophy has its place in human nature, it had it also in the East: only this place has been what it ought to have been—great in appearance; in reality, quite small. Observe how two very contrary opinions may be formed of the East. The man habituated to modern analysis, in casting his eyes upon the sculptured, or even the written monuments which remain to us of the East, struck with the symbolic character which shines out upon all, and which we have not yet well deciphered, not comprehending in it any thing great, is constrained to regard all this symbolic dress as the product of an imagination indeed great, but excessive and extravagant; and, at first, this old Eastern World is accused of being only a mass of ridiculous superstitions. We do not think that also in the East there were men, and that every time we thus accuse a civilization which has endured long, and which endures still, we accuse a great part, and a long age of the human race. On the other hand, when we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there so many truths, and truths so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which the European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before that of the East, and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy. There is yet an error: truth is one thing, philosophy is another; in this distinction is all true knowledge of the human soul, and of history. Not only no epoch of humanity, but not even a single individual, the first no more than the last, has been cut off from an inheritance of the truth. In fact, if you suppose that the last only has possessed it, you raise a terrible problem. What will you do with the first? Destroy him, or place him in relation with his race. Why should he not have known the same truth which the last generations have discovered? Was it his fault that he came first? Why, then, should the truth (and by truth I mean the truths most essential to his moral life)—why,

I say, should these necessary truths have been wanting to him ? No, they were not wanting to him : the first man possessed them as well as the last comer in the human race, but he did not possess them in the same manner. There is no privilege, there are no castes in the human race. Man is equal to man ; and the only difference which exists, which could exist between man and man, is the difference of more or less, that is, the difference of form. A peasant, the lowest of peasants, knows as much as Leibnitz about himself, about the world, and about God, and about their relation ; but he has not the secret of his knowledge ; he renders to himself no account of it ; he does not possess it under that superior form of thought which is called philosophy. Just so it is in the East. Although independent philosophy may not have been wanting to it, nevertheless it can be said that it was not given to the first epoch of civilization to possess the truth under that free and philosophical form which was reserved for the second.

In the East, philosophy exists, like all the other elements of humanity, but in the condition of envelopment, although with strong symptoms and commencements of separation. That which was enveloped was destined to develop itself. The world takes a step forward. Civilization descends from the centre of Asia across the plains of Asia Minor, to the Mediterranean, and upon the coasts of Greece. The Mediterranean and Greece are the empire of liberty and of movement, as the elevated plain of the Indo-Chinese world is the empire of immobility and of despotism.\* I say of immobility and of despotism, and without anger. It was very necessary that the cradle of the world should be firm and fixed, to be able to bear all the developments of human civilization. Child of a progress, Greece herself is necessarily progressive ; this is the first advance of civilization : with it commences liberty upon a great scale. In Greece, all the elements of human nature are the same as in the East : they are

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\* See farther along, Lecture eighth, on the part of Geography in History.



there, but under a new condition—under the condition of the general character of the Greek spirit, which is movement. All is therefore developed, and consequently tends to become more and more separated; upon this theatre of movement and of life, industry, the State, art, religion, without the power of ever passing one another, march to independence.

With the wonders of Grecian industry you are familiar. Grecian industry extended itself into nearly all the world then known. The laws of Greece and of Rome (for the Greek and Roman world are one and the same) bear, without doubt, still a religious character, but they are very much more independent of religion than the laws of the East. For example, read and compare the laws of Menu and the Roman laws. In the laws of Menu, nothing is progressive, for it is not to be supposed that the religion of an epoch may be progressive; it could advance only on the condition of destroying itself. The Roman laws, which were perpetually modified, ought to have had, to be thus modified, a religious character much less strong, although this character, I repeat, was not wanting to them, especially in their origin. As to the arts, who of you is ignorant of the contrast between the arts of Greece and those of the East? The East has little or no painting; for the slight and coarse representations which I find here and there on the monuments which have arrived here, appear to me only painting in its rudest infancy; little sculpture, much architecture: that is, art in the East represents that which is fixed and impersonal, while art in Greece, which, with architecture, has much sculpture, and a considerable portion of painting, represents especially the person, the man. As the religion of Greece is more anthropomorphic than that of India, so the art of Greece is more personal. The step to anthropomorphism\* is an immense one. Anthropomorphism is as much superior to the religions of nature, as man is superior to nature; and the passage

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\* Upon Anthropomorphism and the Religions of Nature, one may consult Cousin's *First Series of Lectures*, Vol. ii., p. 432.

from natural symbolism to anthropomorphic symbolism was the signal and the dawn of the enfranchisement of thought.

In Greece, philosophy followed, and ought of necessity to have followed, the same course with all the other elements of civilization. Because there was more liberty in the play of the other elements, there ought to have been a much greater liberty in philosophy: that it is so, we see.\*

The roots of Greece and Rome are oriental: language, writing, the alphabet, processes of industry and agriculture, mechanical arts, primitive forms of government, primitive processes and characters of art, primitive worship, all are oriental; upon this foreign base the Greek spirit was developed; from this it departed, to arrive at that original and admirable form which is called, *par excellence*, the Greek form. It was the same with philosophy. Its first inspirations, later, perhaps, even some fortunate communications, came to it from the East; but its development is entirely Greek. Philosophy in Greece, just as in the East, commenced by confounding itself with religion; then it passed from worship into mysteries. Mysteries were, in their origin, a conquest of the free spirit. In fact, in mysteries were explanations, undoubtedly rude, and very different from what were afterwards philosophical explanations, yet there certainly were attempts at explanation: men sought in them to render to themselves a reason for the visible representations of worship. You would not believe it, yet from the mysteries came forth philosophy. Little by little, after many attempts and more or less fortunate endeavors in different parts of Greece, it arrives and establishes itself in the very capital of Greece; there, in the focus of lights, always increasing, and in the rapid progress of the Greek spirit, it rejects every symbolic form, and at length assumes that which is its own.

We know at this time, in a certain manner, the day, the month,

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\* Upon the Greek and Roman Philosophy, see the second volume of this Series, Lectures 7 and 8; and the second volume of *Philosophic Fragments*, which is entirely devoted to ancient philosophy.

the year when this great event took place. The day and the month escape me at this moment ; but, certainly, it was the third year of the 77th Olympiad, that is, 470 years before our era, when Socrates was born.

Socrates is a personage eminently historical. He represents an idea, and the most elevated of all, the idea of philosophy, that is, that of reflection in itself : not of reflection applied to this or to that object in particular, but to all ; not of reflection bordering upon and arresting itself at this or that system, but developing itself freely, and ruling all systematic results. There is not a Socratic system, but there is a Socratic spirit. The name of Socrates is attached to scarcely any particular theory. What, then, did Socrates do ? Without being a skeptic, he doubted and he taught to doubt. He addressed himself to the man of industry, to the legislator, to the artist, to the minister of religion, to the sophists, and he demanded of them a reason for their thoughts. He roused the spirit, and made it fertile by the examination ; he demanded little else of others than that they should understand themselves, and make themselves understood by him. To understand self, to render to self a reason, to be clear in regard to self, to know what we say, and what we think, such was the aim of Socrates : a negative aim, without doubt ; but if that was not the end of philosophy, it was its commencement. What, then, was the result ? Socrates produced, not a system, but an immense movement, a movement of reflection ; and as reflection proceeds well or ill, without ceasing to be what it is, as it stops at bad as well as good results, there is in it the explanation of this singular phenomenon, that in the Socratic school should be found Aristippus, as well as Plato, that they should equally claim to be the legitimate children of Socrates. They had, in fact, this unity which they reflected, that they made a free use of their thought, that they aimed at an understanding of self. Now, they understood themselves each in his own way, that is, very differently ; and that at first was inevitable, afterwards it was a benefit ; and far from being a rupture,

it was a richer development of the only true philosophical unity, that of free reflection.

Ten centuries were necessary to exhaust the Socratic movement; it is the glory of this great man, that he gave his name, not to such or such a movement, but to the whole of this immense movement, and that he was, in respect to the form, as much the father of the last Greek philosophers, as of those who went forth immediately from his hands. The philosophy of Socrates had many vicissitudes. After having departed with violence, as is usually the case, from the bosom of the established form of worship, it returned thither under the auspices of men who knew far more of it than Socrates, and who in placing themselves, up to a certain point, and in a certain measure, in right accordance with mysteries and religion, knew perfectly well what they were doing. And they were not for that less philosophers. Why? Because, as I have just said, they knew what they were doing, they willed to do what they were doing, it was their reflection itself, that is, the idea of philosophy, which conducted them there where they consented to go. So the Platonic school was arranged with the pagan symbolism, which had put to death Socrates. Those who defended expiring paganism, and combated with Julien, were the disciples and successors of these same men formed in the school of Socrates, and who, after having lost their master by the great catastrophe which you well know, had much difficulty to escape themselves. That which they had rejected by reflection, the others admire by reflection: in that is the unity of the Greek philosophy from the year 470 before our era, to the year 529 after our era, or, under the consulate of Decius, by the order of Justinian, was formed the last school of philosophy in that same Athens, which had been the cradle of Socrates, of Plato, of Aristotle.

Let us pass to modern history. The Greek and Roman world shone about thirteen or fourteen centuries before it was eclipsed forever. Its existence was much shorter than that of the East; and it ought to have been. The epoch of the world which rep-

resents immobility ought to represent it always, and to remain immovable. The epoch of the world which represents movement, ought to have less duration, and more life. The Greek and Roman epoch was, therefore, not so long as the Oriental epoch. Who knows how long ours shall endure? We are of yesterday. Modern civilization is young, and modern philosophy is younger still. If this idea is not flattering to presumption, it is very favorable to hope; for all that is not behind us, is before us; it is better to have a future than a past.

There are two epochs in modern history: that of its formation, and that of its development. The middle age is but the painful, slow, and bloody formation of modern civilization. In the middle age, as in Greece, as in the East, existed, and could not but have existed, all the elements of human nature; for the middle age belongs to humanity, as well as Greece and the East. All the human elements were there then, but confounded in the dominant element of the middle age; for in every epoch there is, and there always ought to be, a dominant element, which does not exclude the others, but envelops them. The dominant element of the middle age is Christianity. Christianity has taken nearly ten centuries to give a solid basis to our civilization. It commenced industry, it formed the State: making it in its own image, it made art, it also made philosophy; I mean that very celebrated, although little known philosophy, which is called scholasticism.\* As the Oriental philosophy has for its foundation the Vedas, and as the Greek philosophy sprang from mysteries, so the philosophy of the middle age is founded upon the Bible and the Fathers, and upon the sovereign decisions of the Church; and still further, as the unity of the middle age is in the domination of the Church, so the unity of the scholastic philosophy comes from its dependence upon one and the same authority. Nevertheless, the human spirit, with its

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\* Upon the philosophy of the middle age, see Vol. 2d of this Series, as well as Vol. 8d of the *Philosophic Fragments*, devoted to Scholasticism and Abelard.

indomitable energy, was in the middle age ; and although it was then under the most perfect religious form, it was compelled, in the necessity of its nature, to seek to render to itself an account of this form. Thence, little by little, arose a more methodic and more regular system of instruction in the cloisters ; then the universities ; finally, a thousand systems. You would be quite astonished if you knew with what apparent freedom men reasoned in the middle age. You know the quarrels of the nominalists, of the realists, and of the conceptualists. The sects of the scholastics are as numerous as the Greek sects, and as the Indian and Chinese sects. Moreover, there are many truths in the scholastic philosophy ; and as at the present day, after having, in the first moment of emancipation, accused and blasphemed the middle age, we are studying it with ardor, even with passion ; so, after having said much evil of the scholastic philosophy, it would not be impossible, considering that we go always from one extreme to the other, and that it is almost inevitable that it should not be so, it is probable that at the present day, if we should examine the scholastic philosophy, we should be so surprised to comprehend it, and to find it very ingenious, that we should pass at once to admiration. Professing to believe that all truth is contained in Christianity, I must think that any explanation of Christianity ought to contain some profound truths, and you do not see in me an enemy of the scholastic philosophy. But it is not I, it is human nature that says : Thought, which is exercised in a circle which it has not itself traced, and which it dares not pass, may be in possession of the truth ; but still it is not thought in that absolute liberty which characterizes philosophy, properly so called. Scholasticism, in my opinion, is so far from being the last term of philosophy, that, to speak generally, and very rigorously, it is scarcely philosophy at all.

As we know the day, the month, the year, in which the Greek philosophy was sent into the world, so we know, with the same certainty, and with still much more detail, the day and the year when modern philosophy was born. Do you know how long it

is since it was born? By the fact, you are to determine the youth, the infancy, of the philosophical spirit which at this day animates Europe. The grandfather of one of your fathers might have seen him who gave to the world modern philosophy. What is the name, what is the country of this new Socrates? Most certainly he ought to have belonged to the nation most advanced. He should have written, not in the dead language which the Church employed in the middle age, but in the living language, destined for new generations; in that language, called, perhaps, to decompose, one day, all others, and which already is accepted from one end of Europe to the other. This man is a Frenchman: he is Descartes. His first work, written in French, is of the year 1637. Modern philosophy, then, bears the date of 1637!

I have told you that Socrates did not have a system; I will tell you that it is of very little\* importance that Descartes may have had one. The thought of Descartes, which belongs to history, is that of his method. Socrates was free reflection; Descartes is free reflection, elevated to the height of most severe method. Descartes commences by doubting every thing, the existence of God, that of the world, even his own existence; he only stops at that which he cannot doubt without ceasing even to doubt: at that which doubts within—at thought.† Between the reflection of Socrates and the method of Descartes there is an interval of two thousand years. As the Greek dialectics are much more sincere, serious, and profound than those of India, so the method of Descartes is as much superior to the processes of the antique spirit, as our civilization is superior to that of Greece. Once more: Descartes, without doubt, has a system; but his chief glory, as that of Socrates, is, that he gave to the modern world a philosophical spirit, which has produced, and

\* This assertion must not be taken too rigorously. The greatest glory of Descartes is, certainly, his method, but the applications of this method are also of much importance.

† See upon the character of Cartesian doubt, Vol. 2d, Lecture 11th, of the *Fragments of Cartesian Philosophy*, and the *Defence of the University, and of Philosophy*, 3d edition, p. 121.

will produce, a thousand systems. *De la Méthode*, such is the title, at the present day so simple, then so prodigious, under which Descartes presented to the world his thoughts.\*

He was a gentleman of Brittany, a military man, possessing in the highest degree our defects and our qualities; clear, firm, resolute, somewhat rash, thinking in his closet with the same intrepidity that he fought under the walls of Prague. He had made war as an amateur; he philosophized in the same manner, to understand himself, not having the least ambition, having left his country, not, as is usually thought, by force, but voluntarily. He was sufficiently rich, and born of a noble family. The Cardinal de Richelieu, who was well acquainted with men, offered him, or promised him, a pension: it is true that he never touched it. Finally, with some steps on his own part, protected as he was by Father Mersenne, he might have made his way. He loved more to run round the world, to wander in Italy, to talk with Galileo, to busy himself in a village of Holland, and to go to leave his bones in the north, philosophizing for the sake of philosophy, reflecting for the sake of reflecting, exclusively occupied with the necessity of understanding himself, of rendering to himself an account of his knowledge, and of seeing clearly in all things. He valued infinitely more his method than his most illustrious discoveries; so much so, that in a posthumous, and too little known work, he declared that the mathematics are the envelope, and not the foundation, of his method.† “My method,” he says, “has not been invented to solve mathematical problems, but mathematics ought to be learned only for exercise in the practice of this method.”‡ He commences by his method, to it he con-

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\* The true title of the first work of Descartes is: “Discours de la Méthode, pour bien conduire sa raison et chercher la vérité dans les sciences; plus la dioptrique, les météores et la géométrie, qui sont des essais de cette méthode.”

† Complete works of Descartes, Vol. 11, Rules for the Direction of the Mind, p. 218: “Celui qui suivra attentivement ma pensée verra que je n’embrasse ici rien moins que les mathématiques ordinaires, mais que j’expose une autre méthode dont elles sont plutôt l’enveloppe que le fond.”

‡ Ibid. p. 298.



tinually returns. It is the last as well as the first word of all his writings.

Philosophy, once introduced into the modern world in 1637 (and we are speaking here in 1828), has not been arrested; it has been developed in the progress, which ought to exist in the movement of the modern world, proportionally with that of the Greek world, and with that of the Oriental world. In a century and a half—for we date but little farther back—it seems to me philosophical systems have not been wanting to Europe. No, certainly they have not been wanting to it: nevertheless, it is very strange that modern philosophy is accused of losing itself in a labyrinth of systems; it is truly much severity towards such an infant. I remark, that far from being lost in a chaos of systems, without wanting fecundity, it has produced no more than two or three great schools; it is yet in the cradle, thus to speak: we may be proud, without doubt, of the little it has done; but we must reckon much more upon what it will do, upon what it has been called to do. From the first who interpreted the Vedas, to the last Indo-Chinese philosopher, Oriental philosophy did not recoil; from Socrates to Proclus, the Greek philosophy did not recoil; no more will modern philosophy recoil from Descartes to the last generations of our Europe.

Observe that modern philosophy has its unity, even as the Greek philosophy. Its unity, indeed, appears to me thus far much more striking than its diversity. This unity is, and cannot but be, this point common to all philosophers, that they make use of their reason with absolute freedom. In the middle age, Abelard, Albert, Saint Thomas, Duns Scott, were, it is true, original spirits, sometimes even rash; but in their most daring flights, they always had their eyes upon the limits which had been traced for them by ecclesiastical authority, and they remained there, or, at least, pretended to remain there. At the present day the emancipation is complete; there reigns even in the philosophy of our age a sort of apparent skepticism, an excessive negative spirit, which betrays at once both the ruling

memory ; but I am very sure that I do not falsify the sense, and that I am faithful to his thought. Great complaint, at the present day, is made of the continual progress of the spirit of philosophy, which dissolves, as is said, and grinds to dust the political and religious creeds of modern Europe. In the first place, I do not see this dissolution, I do not believe in it ; I have seen something of Europe, and it is not near its dissolution. There is only, there is, I acknowledge it, a considerable progress, a perpetual progress of the spirit of philosophy, of reflection applied to every thing. The human race is now assuming the dress of manhood ; it is determined to see clearly into more than one thing hitherto hid in venerable darkness. Well ! I also, at this spectacle, thank God for having given me birth at an epoch in which he has been pleased to elevate, little by little, to the highest degree of thought, a greater number of my fellow-men.

## LECTURE III.

## HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY.

Recapitulation of the last two Lectures. A word upon the method employed.—Subject of this Lecture: Application to the history of philosophy of what has been said of philosophy. 1st, That the history of philosophy is a real element of universal history, like the history of legislation, of arts, and of religions. 2d, That the history of philosophy is clearer than all other parts of history, and that it contains their explanation. Logical demonstration. Historical demonstration. Explanation of Indian civilization by philosophy: Bhagavad-Gita. Greece: Explanation of the age of Pericles by the philosophy of Socrates. Modern history: Explanation of the sixteenth century by the philosophy of Descartes. Explanation of the eighteenth century by the philosophy of Condillac and of Helvetius. 3d, That the history of philosophy comes last in the development of historical labors, as philosophy is the last degree of the interior development of the mind, and of the movement of an epoch.—Relation of the history of philosophy to general history.—Favorable situation of our age for the history of philosophy.

In my first lecture I showed that philosophy is a special need, an element of human nature, as real and as certain as all the others, and, at the same time, that it takes a more elevated rank. In my last lecture, calling history to the aid of analysis, I endeavored to demonstrate that civilization, the visible image of human nature, includes at all epochs a philosophic element, which also has its part upon the stage of the world—a distinct part, always subsisting, and continually increasing. I must take the liberty to recommend to your attention the method which has conducted us hither, for it will preside over the whole of my instruction. I should be fortunate if I could present to you some important and little known truths; I should be much more fortunate still if I could succeed in establishing in your minds that which is above all particular truth, method; for method, in guaranteeing the exactness of the truths which I shall develop before you, will give you the means of rectifying the numerous errors which, without

doubt, will escape me, and of finding for yourselves new truths. This is to be, above all, a course of method ; and the method, I repeat, which shall preside over my instruction, is the harmony of psychology and of history.

I come to apply to the history of philosophy all that I have said of philosophy itself ; I come to recommend it to the same favor, and to show that it also sustains the same relations with the other branches of universal history that philosophy sustains with the other elements of civilization and of human nature. This lecture will therefore be only a corollary of the first two.

In the first place, it is very plain that if philosophy is a fundamental need of humanity, the different ways in which men have successively satisfied this need, according to times and according to places, deserve to be collected and reproduced ; that, in a word, the history of philosophy ought to have its place in the general history of humanity, as much as the history of industry, the history of legislation, the history of arts, and that of religions.

I hesitate to advance ; but it is not I, it is the most common logic which itself draws this conclusion from the premises we have laid down. If it is true that the philosophic element in thought is superior to all other elements, I say it with some hesitation, but I am forced to say it, the history of philosophy is equally superior to all the other parts of the history of humanity : it is superior to them, by possessing the same advantages which recommend philosophy : it is more luminous than all the other parts of history, and if they lend to it their light, it returns to them another light far differently vivid and penetrating, which illuminates them in their profoundest depths, and throws the full light of day upon the whole of universal history.

To say that the history of philosophy is more luminous than political history, than that of arts, than that of religions, is, I grant, to advance a paradox. This is, however, only the consequence of the proposition which was established in the first lecture—that all clearness is in ideas. Philosophical abstractions have not this reputation, I know : it is, in truth, pure ingratitude ;

for at bottom we rest all faith upon these abstractions which we accuse so much ; we believe only them, we comprehend only them, and it is in them, and by them, that we comprehend all things.

Let us take an example at once very elevated and very common. Behold two objects very positive, very real, and which have nothing abstract about them, two concrete quantities ; and behold two others. In presence of these two groups of concrete and very different quantities, and whatsoever they may be, I affirm, and we all affirm, that their numerical relation is a relation of equality. Well ! I ask you whether this truth, this relation, lies in what there is of concrete existence in these two groups of quantities ? Not the least in the world. Deny, if you are able, this general and abstract proposition : that two equal two ; I ask you, then, if you would consider yourselves authorized to say that these two concrete quantities numerically equal these two other concrete quantities. No, certainly : it is, therefore, the abstract that elucidates the concrete, and that constitutes the truth which we at first perceived in it. Understand me well : I do not mean to say that the human mind starts by abstraction ;\* that it has, at first, in itself a clear and perfect intelligence of the abstract relations of numbers, and that then, armed with this intelligence, it determines the relations of sensible objects and concrete quantities ; but I maintain that at the sight of these concrete quantities, while the senses are struck with the exterior and visible appearance, the mind, following with activity in the course of the senses and of the imagination, conceives the abstract in the concrete ; so that then, by a complex operation, the mystery of which is the mystery itself of the connection between our sensible nature and our intellectual nature, we affirm that these two concrete quantities, and these two other concrete quantities, are numerically equal. Now, we admit the relation of these concrete quantities only because we

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\* See Cousin's first Series, Vol. 2d, Lectures 2-4, page 48.

admit the relation of quantities in themselves abstract. All light, then, is in abstraction. Let us take another example. Let us suppose that a certain phenomenon takes place at this moment, that a certain change occurs under our eyes at the moment in which we are speaking; there is not one of us who would not at the very instant deny that the change has taken place of itself, that is, without some cause: all of us would affirm the same thing; and often as any phenomenon appears to us, we are in some way constrained to suppose a cause which could make it appear, and to which we refer it.\* Well! where is there in external things, in visible phenomena, this relation which we suppose there is in them, the relation of cause and effect? It is no longer permitted, after Hume, to suppose that sensible phenomena, in that which is determinate, visible, and concrete, contain the relation of effect and cause; it is proved that sensible phenomena give only a fortuitous conjunction, an accidental connection: a ball, for example, which is in movement after being struck by another, a movement which takes place, and another which follows. The relation of cause and effect is nevertheless there, and every human being necessarily places it there. It is there, but it is not the sensibility which discovers it, it is the mind; just so it is abstract truth which lays the foundation of, and gives legitimacy to, the truth which is found in the concrete. In the visible world there is a superior arithmetic, and a superior geometry which the world contains, but which it does not constitute; an arithmetic and a geometry entirely abstract, which the eye of a true geometrician perceives, and in which he sees nature much more than he sees it in nature. All light, as all truth, is, therefore, in abstraction; that is, in reflection; that is, once more, in philosophy. I hasten to arrive at history.

In history, also, there are two elements. There are material

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\* See Cousin's Works, 1st Series, Vol. 1st, course of 1817, programme, page 216, and 1st Lecture, page 245, etc.; Vol. 2d, page 56, etc.; Vol. 4th, Lecture 22d, page 487, etc.

events, which are accomplished sometimes on the fields of battle, sometimes in the cabinet: there are more or less important movements of industry; there are the master-pieces of the different arts; there is the reign of such or such a religion. The thought of an epoch is there, without doubt; but it is there under the forms which, in manifesting it, unfaithfully express it, since each one of these forms express it, and can express it, only after its own manner, that is, in a confined and particular manner. But philosophy disengages thought from every exterior and limited form, and comprehends it in its most general, most abstract character, in a character most adequate to thought itself. Thus it is by the favor of philosophy that the thought of an epoch comes to a knowledge of itself; in no other manner can the thought of an epoch know itself; it exists without doubt, but it is for itself as if it existed not. Philosophy is, therefore, the internal element, the abstract element, the ideal element, the reflective element, the most vivid and the highest consciousness of an epoch. In all epochs of civilization there reigns an obscure, inmost, profound thought. It develops itself as it can in the laws, the arts, the religion, which are its more or less luminous symbols; it traverses these successively in order to acquire a complete consciousness and understanding of itself. Now, this consciousness and understanding of itself, it acquires only in philosophy. Run over all the annals of civilization, and you will find that it is always the philosophy of an epoch which expresses its thought, which disengages it from its political and religious veils, and takes it upon itself to translate it into an abstract, clear, and precise formula. Take at pleasure such or such an epoch of the history of humanity; throw away its philosophy, and you will find how obscure that epoch becomes; on the other hand, give back to it its philosophy, and you will give back to it its explanation and its light.

Transport yourselves to the East, and, in order to limit your horizon, stop in India. Cast your eyes upon the universal symbolism which everywhere exists, and endeavor to decipher its meaning;

seek sincerely what is told by this history, half political, half mythological, without chronology, like eternity; what these monuments of art and of religion, so rude, so indefinite, so extravagant in appearance, signify. There is beneath all this an idea, without doubt; but ask yourselves what it is. If you are sincere, you will be convinced that nothing clear arises from this extraordinary spectacle. For myself, I will confess that very often, in considering the monuments of this ancient civilization, my thought bends, and is troubled. But I only need to read again some pages of a philosophic work, and immediately a vast and sure light rises to my eyes above this mysterious civilization, and the spirit of its religions, of its arts, of its laws, reflected upon this single point, is wholly revealed.

Open the *Bhagavad-Gita*;\* it is a very short episode in an immense poem. Two great armies are in the presence of each other, and about to engage in battle. There is preparation for immense carnage. In one of the two armies there is a young warrior personally very brave, but who, upon the point of shedding the blood of his kinsmen, and of his friends (for the two armies are composed of friends and of kinsmen), feels his courage abandoning him. He engages another person to advance his chariot a little into the midst of the plain, for the purpose of reconnoitering the situation of affairs; and after having cast his eyes over the two armies, the good Ardschunas avows to Crishna his uncertainty. What does Crishna respond to him? "In truth, Ardschunas, you are very ridiculous with your pity. Why do you speak of friends and of kinsmen? Why do you speak of men? Kinsmen, friends, men, beasts, or stones, are all one. An eternal force has made every thing that you see, and renews it without cessation. That which is to-day a man, yesterday was a plant, and to-morrow, perhaps, will return to a plant. The principle of every thing is eternal; what matters the rest?"

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\* Upon the Indian philosophy, and particularly upon that of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, see Vol. 2d, Lecture 6, of this work.



Thou art as a Schatrias, as a man of the caste of warriors, doomed to fight : do it, therefore : from it will result a fearful carnage : to-morrow's sun will shine upon the world, will illuminate new scenes, and the eternal principle will subsist. Besides this principle all is illusion. Your error is, that that is taken for real which is only apparent ; if you attach any value to appearances, you are deceived ; if you attach any value to your action, you are still deceived ; for as every thing is only a grand illusion, action, when one takes it for real, is itself only an illusion ; the beauty, the merit of an action, is, that it should be performed with an entire indifference to the results it can produce. It is necessary to act without doubt, but as if one should not act. Nothing exists but the eternal principle, being in itself. The highest wisdom is to let every thing take its course, or to do what we are compelled to do as if we did it not, without concerning ourselves about the result, interiorly immobile, and with the eyes fixed upon the absolute principle which alone exists with a veritable existence."

Such is, under a form somewhat occidental, the philosophic *résumé* of this sublime episode. Now, with this torch in hand, examine that which had at first appeared so obscure, and the darkness will at least become visible. You will comprehend how ✓ before this theism, at once terrible and chimerical, represented in extravagant and gigantic symbols, human nature must have trembled and denied itself ; how art, in its powerless attempt to represent being in itself, must have raised itself without limit to colossal and irregular creations ; how, God being all, and man nothing, a formidable theocracy must have pressed upon humanity, taken from it all liberty, all movement, all practical interest, consequently all true morality ; and again, how man, despising himself, has not been able to take any thought for recalling the memory of his actions ; how there is no history of man, and no chronology in India.

Pass from the East into Greece ; place yourselves in the age of Pericles, and there compare, in point of clearness, the exterior events, the legislative measures, the works of art, the representa-

tions of religion, with these abstractions, in appearance unintelligible, which are called philosophy, and see from which side comes to you most light upon the spirit of this great age.

Pericles enacted a law, by virtue of which all the soldiers, both on land and sea, received pay. What is the meaning of such a law? It is clear that it perfectly accorded with the dictatorship of Pericles, who, in procuring the passage of such a law under his administration, attached to himself the army of the land and of the sea. We are able to find still other modes of comprehending this law. But, in fine, considered in itself, what great light does it shed upon the epoch of which it makes a part? Does it illustrate much the history of art, and that of the Athenian religion?

Change the example. Take a work of art of this same epoch; take that fine statue, which you can see at the Royal Museum, which may be referred to the age of Pericles, the Pallas, called the Pallas of Velletri.\* If you compare it with the other statues which the Greek chisel produced a century or two after that of Pericles, you will find between them a striking difference. In the latter, the arms are pressed close to the body, the feet are joined together, there is a stiffness, an absence of movement and of life; in fine, a general aspect which contrasts wonderfully with that which this admirable statue offers at first sight. It is still compact, sufficiently massive, larger than the ordinary size of nature, and of a very severe style; but the feet are already sufficiently separated from each other: but for its inflexibility, it would be able to walk. The drapery marks without effort the different parts of the body; one feels that a living being is beneath. One arm bears the ægis, and the other, the sign itself of activity and of energy, the lance. In its features, upon its brow, is calm and profound thought; one sees that it is not a woman; one sees at the same time that it is not a divinity which is a stranger to humanity, an indifferent quality of being, but something

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\* Museum of the King, *Salle de la Pallas*, No. 810. See the Description of Antiquities, page 185.

superhuman, and, at the same time, human, which has consciousness of itself, which has power, which knows, which wills, which acts. One is easily struck with this character of the Pallas; nevertheless, I am not very sure that I do not, in this manner of conceiving it, borrow something from my philosophic studies.

Examine the religion, the most luminous of all the religions of Greece, that of the city of intelligence, the religion of Athens; put yourselves in the presence, if not of the monuments, at least of the descriptions of them which remain to us. It is said that every year, in the great Panathenean rites, there was carried in procession to the Acropolis a symbolic vessel with a veil upon which were figured the actions of Pallas, her victory over the Titans, children of the earth who had undertaken to scale Olympus and dethrone Jupiter. We can clearly perceive something in these mysterious representations; we see clearly that there is in them the idea of conflict between moral force and physical force; that this Pallas is not an astronomical symbol, like the divinities of Egypt, and that this is not a religion of nature; that there are in them allusions to civilization and to laws. All this is perceived, but so obscurely, that, in a dialogue of Plato, Socrates declares that he has very little comprehension of all these fabulous representations; and, addressing himself to a priest, he asks him if he accepts such stories. Socrates inquires of him again in regard to another form of worship, that of Jupiter, and concerning the legend that Jupiter, in order to punish some bad action of his father Saturn, had mutilated him: from which the interlocutor of Socrates, blaming an action of his own father, piously concludes that, in order to imitate Jupiter, he could not do better than to accuse his father in the tribunal of justice, and demand his death. This is the manner in which Euthyphron\* understood the worship of Jupiter. Socrates had

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\* See Plato's dialogue entitled Euthyphron; Vol. 1, of Cousin's *Translation* of Plato, p. 19, 20, 21. See also, in regard to the difficulty which Socrates found in understanding the popular mythology, the commencement of the *Phædrus*, Vol. 6, p. 8.

the candor to avow that he comprehended no great thing in it. To-day we comprehend it better. Nevertheless, has symbolic criticism succeeded in dissipating all obscurity in this respect?

On the other hand, take the philosophy of Socrates. Socrates reached no well-defined system, but he gives directions for thought. If he does not trace for it its whole career, he assigns to it at least its point of departure; this point of departure is reflection applied to every thing, and especially to human nature. The study of human nature, the consciousness of self, such is the new principle of the philosophy of Socrates.\* Although before him the Pythagoreans put all philosophy in numbers, and the Ionians in physical phenomena, Socrates first demonstrated that if man is able to understand any thing, numbers and the world, it is in virtue of his own nature and the laws of his nature; that it is also this nature which it is necessary before all to examine; in a word, for mathematics and cosmology, Socrates substituted, or added to them, psychology. So behold man, thus far neglected and unappreciated, established as the point of departure and the centre of all study, constituted in his own right a being of infinite price, and the most worthy of thought. This is what the Socratic philosophy categorically says, in the severe and lucid forms of metaphysical abstraction. This abstraction sheds a boundless light upon the whole age that was able to produce it. With it nothing is more clear than the age of Pericles. If the general work of the epoch resulted in the creation of psychology, it is quite necessary to suppose that the idea itself of psychology, that is, the importance of human personality, should preside at the formation of this epoch, and at the organization of the elements of which it is composed. How many things do you then understand which before were for you inexplicable enigmas! The fundamental idea of an age which created psychology ought to have been the idea of the grandeur of personality, in heaven as upon earth, in religion, in the arts, in the laws, as in philosophy.

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\* Lecture 2 of this volume, and Vol. 2d of this Series, Lecture 7.

Whenever philosophy shall attribute a supreme importance to the study of human personality, you may be sure that the gods, before whom the human personality shall bend the knee, will be gods more or less personal themselves; you may be sure that the representations of art will no longer fall into extravagant exaggeration, but that they will have that character of definiteness, of finiteness even in the bosom of the infinite, which is precisely the character of personality; in fine, you may be sure that the legislation of the times will respect liberty, will protect it, will extend it; that legislation will be liberal, and more or less democratic. Behold why, instead of raising an army equipped at its own expense, consequently composed of the best families, of the rich, and of Eupatridæ, Pericles established an army in which all classes, poor as well as rich, might enter—an army penetrated with the spirit of the times, and capable of defending it. This is, once more, the explanation of the law by which Pericles gave a few aboli to all free-born citizens who might assist at political assemblies. I do not say that without the philosophic element the age of Pericles would be incomprehensible; but it seems to me that it ought, now, to appear to you incontestable that the highest light comes to it from the very abstractions of the Socratic philosophy.

If we apply this point of view to modern history, we shall not find it less fertile and less luminous. In general terms, in the progress of civilization, the exterior elements of each age, and, if you will permit me to use this language, the symbols of the idea of each age illustrate themselves, and continually reveal, more and more, the spirit which animates them. Thus the idea of the Greek world is more transparent than that of the Oriental world; the idea of modern history is still more so than that of ancient history. But even modern times are much more intelligible, illustrated and interpreted by philosophy. One comprehends, without doubt, sufficiently well to-day the interior thought concealed in the movements of the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, I ask if we do not comprehend it in a manner still entirely differ-

ent, when we see it at the beginning of the seventeenth century resolving itself into the Cartesian philosophy. The sixteenth century, with its tendencies most hidden, unknown to itself, aggrandized, idealized and developed to their last consequence, became man, in the person of him who came to say, in 1637: "There is no other authority than that of thought: existence itself is known only by thought; and, for myself, I am only because I think. All truth exists for me only upon this ground, that it becomes evident to me in the free exercise of my thought."\* It is not only the authority of Aristotle which is here denied, it is all other authority than that of the human mind. Without dwelling further upon this point, you will conceive what new light such a fact throws upon all contemporaneous facts.

I could take at pleasure a certain number of ages, and propose to you, the exterior elements of each one of these ages being given, to determine beforehand for you the philosophy which would be the result of this age; or rather, and with much more confidence, the philosophy of an epoch being given, to determine in a general manner the exterior elements of this epoch. I will confine myself to the eighteenth century. Take the philosophy of the eighteenth century, and see if, this philosophy being once given, you could not certainly deduce from it the entire century.

Suppose that, in the midst of a century, a man should rise up and say:† There is no idea which does not come through the senses; and that this proposition should be universally accepted, and that it should make the philosophy of the century. Suppose, again, that at the side of this man another should rise up and add: As there is nothing in thought which may not have come by the senses, and that all our ideas, in the last analysis, might be reduced to sensations; so in the determining motives of our actions, there is not one which might not be referred to an

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\* Lecture 2, and Vol. 2d, Lectures 3 and 11.

† First Series, Vol. 8d, Lectures 2 and 8, Condillae.

interested motive, to selfishness.\* Suppose that this doctrine should seem so evident to the century which saw it appear, that it should be established almost without combat in all the ranks of society, and that in the saloons of the capital, a person† who represented, thus briefly to speak, the intelligence of her epoch, might have said with truth: "The success of the book of Helvetius is not surprising: he is a man who has told the secret of all the world." No, certainly, this is not the secret of humanity, and of all the epochs of history; but it is very true that it was the secret of that epoch, and of nearly all the world in the eighteenth century.

Well! I ask you: When this light once rises upon the eighteenth century, does not one behold it much more easily? The government of such an epoch will not assuredly be a free government, founded upon a recognition of, and a respect for, the rights of humanity. The philosophy of sensation and of selfishness ought to have been contemporaneous with a social order without dignity, with a government arbitrary and absolute, but an absolute government which was itself yielding to feebleness and corruption. It is impossible that religion may then have had a great influence over the souls of men; for every religion, whatever it may be, and particularly the great, the holy religion of Christ, inculcates a very different doctrine from that of the senses and of pleasure. The arts and poetry would necessarily be characterized with littleness and meanness in such an age, for it is not possible that the form of thought and of sentiment may be great, where sentiment and thought are wanting in grandeur.‡

Examine also all the elements of the eighteenth century, and

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\* First Series, Vol. 8d, Lectures 4th and 5th, *Helvetius*, and Lecture 6th, *Saint-Lambert*.

† Madame Dudeffant. Ibid., at the end of Lectures 4th and 5th, the letter of Turgot.

‡ See upon the eighteenth century a complete judgment, in Vol 2d, 1st Lecture of this Series.

you will be able to determine beforehand their character, while searching in them for the counter-proof of the philosophy of that epoch. One can, I repeat, perform the two following operations : start from the exterior elements of an epoch, and end at its philosophy, or go from the philosophy of that epoch to the other contemporaneous elements ; with this difference, that in beginning with philosophy, one places himself in the very centre of an epoch ; whereas, in taking another element, whatever it may be, one remains upon one of the points of the circumference, and the total movement escapes him.

If these considerations are true, it follows that as philosophy is the culminating point of human nature, the history of philosophy is also the culminating point of history, and that is, we must say, the history of history.

The history of philosophy is in some sort to the other parts of the history of humanity, what the history of humanity is to that of external nature. In external nature there is also a principle of thought, but a principle of thought which knows not itself, which concealed, and, as it were, enveiled in the inorganic world, begins to manifest itself in the vegetable world, manifests itself more in animality, and lays hold of itself, and says *me* only in the consciousness of man. Yes, there is a history of the external world ; for this world has its development and its progress. Humanity has also its development richer still, and just as regular. This development is history, properly so called, with its different branches, industrial and political history, the history of religions, the history of arts ; and the most elevated is the history of philosophy. It is there only that humanity knows itself fully with all its elements, borne thus to speak to their highest power, and placed in their truest light. As the history of humanity is the crown of the history of nature, so the history of philosophy is the crown of the history of humanity.

Behold how the history of philosophy always comes the last. When the political history, the history of arts, the history of religions, is feeble, the history of philosophy is feeble or nothing



When history grows great, that of philosophy grows great in the same proportion. In India we have seen that there is no history, for the reason that there is no liberty there ; that men, attaching no importance to themselves or to their actions, take little care to leave any record of their deeds ; that, the chiefs of the people representing the gods, being gods themselves, chronology is confounded with mythology, and history is not able to arrive at an independent existence. Now, where there is no history, or next to none of the other elements of civilization, do not look for a history of philosophy. In Greece, with liberty began chronology and history. There men, being free and respecting themselves, attach some importance to the actions which they perform, recollect them, write at first chronicles, and, little by little, elevate themselves to history, properly so called. Then, but only then, a history of philosophy is possible. It is thus in Greece that the history of philosophy was born ; but it remained there, and ought to have remained there, in a state of infancy. Political history alone was brilliant in Greece ; there was scarcely any history either of arts or of religions ; the history of philosophy, therefore, participated in this general feebleness ; it scarcely went beyond chronicles ; at least, it has reached us only in the form of chronicles of ancient philosophy. In the middle age there were only some chronicles of the same kind. It is with modern civilization that history has commenced, that it has departed from a chronicle, and that it has finally arrived at its veritable form. It has passed little by little from politics to art, and to religion. Considerable researches have been undertaken in all the parts of the history of humanity. The history of philosophy has come in its turn and in its place in this general progress of historical labors. It is in the nature of things that this movement should extend itself continually. Born of yesterday, an immense future is before the history of philosophy ; arrived the last, for it the most elevated place is reserved : the destinies of philosophy ought to be its own. Let us hope that France, which already commences with so much brilliancy political history, which has

given a successor to Winckelman, an interpreter to Creutza, the France\* which has already produced Descartes, will not be unfaithful to herself, and that after having entered upon the philosophical career which she once opened to other nations, she will enter in her turn upon that of the history of philosophy, and will leave there her mark. I shall be happy if my instruction may be able to hasten this future, and attract the attention and the interest of so many minds full of ardor and strength to philosophy and its history.

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\* M. Quatramère de Quincy. See 1st Series, Vol. 2d, Lectures 14th, 15th, and 16th.

## LECTURE IV.

## OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL METHOD IN HISTORY.

That the history of philosophy is at the same time special and general.—Of the qualities of an historian of philosophy. Of the love of humanity.—Of the historical method. Two methods. Empirical method: which is almost impracticable, and cannot give the reason of facts.—Of the speculative method.—Union of the two methods in one, which, starting from the human reason, from its elements, from their relations and their laws, would seek their development in history. The result of such a method would be the harmony of the interior development of reason with its historical development, the harmony of philosophy with its history.—Application of this method. Three points that the method should embrace: 1st, The complete enumeration of the elements of reason; 2d, Their reduction; 3d, Their relation.—Historical antecedents of this research. Aristotle and Kant. Vices of their theory. 1st, Enumeration of the elements of reason; 2d, Reduction to two, unity and variety, identity and difference; absolute being, relative being, the absolute cause and the relative cause, the infinite and the finite; 3d, Their relation.—Contemporaneity of the two essential ideas of reason in the order of their acquisition.—Superiority and priority of the one over the other in the order of nature.—Necessary coexistence of the two, and generation of the one by the other.—Recapitulation.

THE history of philosophy is, at the same time, special and very general. It is special, for it retraces the development of a particular element of human nature, the reason; in this respect it has its peculiar events, its appropriate movement, and a world of its own. But as the development of reason presupposes that of all the other elements of human nature, so the history of philosophy presupposes that of all the other branches of civilization, the history of industry, of legislation, of art, of religion; it is, as I said in the last lecture, the history of history. For a century past it has been regarded as an important conquest of the historical spirit that it has risen from the interest, until then concentrated upon some individuals, and upon military and diplomatic events, to the superior interest of manners, of legislation, of the arts and letters, in a people, in a country, in an epoch, and this has been, in

fact, a considerable progress. But what, indeed, is one people, one country, one epoch in the general movement of humanity, wherein meet all people, all countries, all epochs, all legislations, all systems of art, all religions? The idea of reproducing this entire movement must be a late conquest of history; it dates from the last half of the last century. Truly this great movement is itself only the basis of the history of philosophy. I do not exaggerate; I simply draw the direct consequence of this principle, that reason governs all its applications, and can know itself only after knowing all things else.

A true history of philosophy, while it is special, must then be universal, and be connected with the entire history of humanity. The history of civilization is the pedestal of the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy expresses, in short, the history of religion, the history of art, the history of legislation, the history of wealth, and, to a certain point, physical geography itself; for if the history of philosophy belongs to that of humanity, the history of humanity belongs to that of nature, the first basis and theatre of humanity, to the constitution of the globe, to its divisions; in a word, to its physical geography. Considered under this point of view, the history of philosophy is of the greatest interest, but in order to reach this height it must have traversed many ages; and the philosophy, too, which it traces in its march must itself have been able to seize upon the universal harmony of things, the harmony of nature and humanity, and that of all parts of humanity among themselves, under the government of reason.

Who shall realize this ideal of the history of philosophy? He must be a man who combines the greatest variety of knowledge, and profound erudition, with the most exalted philosophical views; a man who is not a stranger to any of the great facts which compose the history of humanity, and who, while he comprehends them in their external development, can conceive their secret relations, their true order, can go for this order to its only source, in the understanding, the constituent elements of hu-

manity, and thence, from the bosom of the invisible world of consciousness, prophesy in some manner the events of the visible world of history. He must not be less than Leibnitz himself; that is, of the greatest mind, and of the most extensive knowledge, and still a Leibnitz on the verge of the closing century of humanity.

I turn my eyes from this ideal of the historian of philosophy. I dare face but a single one of the qualities necessary to this historian; but that one I willingly look upon, because it is not a quality of the mind, but a moral quality, almost a virtue, which one cannot too often bring to mind in order never to lose sight of it, both in science and in life: I mean the love of humanity. The true love of humanity must attach us to all that belongs to man. If you love human nature, it is necessary to accept it such as it is. Now it is complete in each one of you. Enter into your own consciousness; seize there all the parts of humanity, the idea of the useful, the idea of the just, the idea of the beautiful, the idea of the holy, the idea of the true; it is by that that you will exercise yourself in recognizing and in comprehending all the parts of history; for if there is in human nature a single element which may be a burden to you, for which you experience any repugnance, you will transport this repugnance into history; after having mutilated humanity in yourself, you will mutilate it in history; you will yield to fanatical prejudices of one kind or of another; you will perceive in history only industry, or art, or religion, or legislation, or philosophy. Accept them all, for they all belong to man. Study entire humanity: in yourself first, and in your consciousness, then in that consciousness of the human race which is called history.

*Homo sum : humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

Let this be our common motto: I shall try not to be unfaithful to it.

The history of philosophy which I shall one day present to you, shall then be very general and very special. I shall exclude nothing, but I shall direct you towards the particular object

of the history of philosophy. I shall commence with the theatre of history, or physical geography ; then I shall place before you the principal events which make ordinary history. I will bring to your remembrance the great political institutions, the different forms of government which have passed over human societies, the religions which have civilized the world, the arts which have embellished it ; and after having run over these different degrees of human development, I shall arrive at the last and most exalted of all—at philosophy. You understand that, pressed by time, I must pass along rapidly without forgetting any of these degrees, contenting myself with marking my course, and traversing more or less quickly the spheres anterior to the philosophic sphere, in order to stop at that, and there gather carefully the light which must illumine all the rest, and serve as a torch for the whole of history.

But before setting out upon our journey, we have to examine a question of the greatest importance—that of the method which can conduct us most surely to the end which we propose, and put us in possession of the true history of humanity and of philosophy. This question necessarily presents itself at the commencement of the career.

There are two historical methods. That which presents itself first and naturally to the mind, is the experimental method. It seems that history, being a collection of facts, and the history of philosophy being itself only a collection of facts of a particular kind, which are called systems, nothing is necessary but to apply to these facts the same method that is applied to all the others. We should at first state them and describe them, then seek out their relations, from these relations deduce laws, and with these laws determine the order and development of the history of philosophy. We should take a certain number of epochs, of schools, of celebrated systems, study successively these epochs, these schools, these systems ; a close observation would give, little by little, the relations which separate them and which unite them, and the laws of their general formation. Nothing appears

more simple, more easy, and more wise than such a proceeding ; still, it is almost impracticable, and it can lead to no great result.

If you pretend that the only legitimate historical method is the experimental method, it is necessary to be faithful to this pretension, to make use exclusively of the experimental method, never to quit it, and never admit any other method which may without our knowledge govern and guide us, although you may believe, and pretend to be guided by experience alone. Now, behold what conditions the exclusive employment of the experimental method imposes. As it accepts no result anterior to observation, there are for it no epochs agreed upon in the history of philosophy. What, in fine, is a philosophical epoch ? It is a certain number of systems and schools brought to a general point of view, which, in the eyes of the historian, appears to govern all these systems, all these schools, and to make of them a unity. You easily conceive that empiricism cannot commence by transporting into history distinctions and classifications which it has not made, results which are strangers to it, and which to it would be pure hypotheses. Speak not, then, of the East, of Greece, of Rome, of the middle age, of modern times, or of any other classification at which experience will perhaps stop, but from which it ought not to start. Otherwise it takes for granted what is a matter of question, and, believing that it is proceeding *a posteriori*, it in reality proceeds *a priori* ; it does what it does not wish to do, and knows not what it does. Instead of classifications and historical divisions already made, instead of conventional epochs, it can only have before it at its beginning three or four thousand years filled by thousands of schools and systems, among which it must cast itself, and steer its course as best it can.

The experimental method, at its commencement, not only can have no epochs, but can have no schools. For, what is a school ? It is a certain number of systems more or less connected in time, but, above all, connected by a certain resemblance of principles

and views. This is doubtless a classification less vast than that of an epoch ; but it is still a classification, that is, a result at which the experimental method cannot at first legitimately arrive. Whence it follows that there are no schools, no epochs for this method at its commencement.

And let it not say that if it tramples under foot the prejudice of epochs and conventional schools, it will take, upon the faith of mankind, the great systems which have made so much noise in the world, and will establish itself upon solid ground. This, again, is a prejudice. The human race is, without doubt, a great authority, but it is no more necessary to speak of the authority of the human race than of any other, when one pretends to be guided only by experience. Strictly, empiricism has the right to assert that one system merits more attention than another, only after it has examined and probed both. It has no right to run hastily over certain systems, that, for example, of Posidonius the Stoic, and give great attention to Zeno ; for who maintains that Posidonius does not merit as much attention as Zeno ? You must necessarily suppose that the human race has well distributed glory, which, in your eyes, is but an hypothesis. Thus, empiricism must not only study celebrated philosophers, it must study all philosophers in looking up the scattered fragments, and constructing painfully their systems. Behold, then, empiricism in the presence of three or four thousand years, filled not by epochs, not by schools, but by systems more or less celebrated, but which must be equally studied. Open the catalogue of the Pythagorians, which the learned Fabricius has prepared, you will find it very long ; still it is incomplete ; and Fabricius, although aided by Harl  s,\* has omitted many persons that we discover every day. As much may be said of the Platonists, of the Stoics, of the Peripatetics, of the Alexandrians. It is necessary to study them all in detail, under pain of being unfaithful to the experimental method. Now, as in following rigorously this

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\* *Bibliotheca Græca*, ed. Harl  s, Vol. 1.



method in order to arrive at general results of any value, it would be necessary to live many ages, and as one cannot count upon such a destiny, it is necessary to apply to another method.

Let us go further. Let us suppose that, after having interrogated all the isolated systems, scattered through all ages, we have arrived by a single observation at the reconstruction of the different schools, and, by that, at the reconstruction of fundamental epochs, and that the experimental method finds itself in possession of all the facts of history and philosophy, distinguished and classified; where is it then? It has a chronological history: it knows that the East is not Greece; that the East has preceded the Greek and Roman world; that this has preceded the middle age, which has preceded the epoch in which we are. This is a fact, but does this fact suffice you? Is this result sufficient for all the wants of thought? Does reason consent to know only what was as having been, and what is as being; and does it not wish to know why what has preceded, has preceded, and why what has followed, has followed? Does it not wish to know all that it knows in a reasonable manner, in an order which may be that of reason? Does it not wish to render to itself an account of these facts, to comprehend them in their causes, and refer them to their ultimate laws, that is, to something necessary? To this it has been replied, and the reply still is, that from the facts themselves will be drawn the necessity of the facts. I beg any one to take the trouble to effect the metamorphosis of fact into right, of the contingent into the necessary. When this metamorphosis shall have been legitimately effected, then will I believe that if the experimental method is impracticable, it is a pity that it should be so, for it might have been able to satisfy at length the wants of humanity; but the metamorphosis is impossible: we see that which is; we observe it, we submit it to experience; but that which should be, the reason of phenomena, their necessity we do not see, do not touch, do not observe, and we are here in a world which does not fall under the experiment-

al method. It remains, then, for us to address ourselves to another method. Let us try.

Think of it seriously. What is the object of history? What is the stuff of which history is made? Who is the historical personage? Evidently it is man. There are many different elements in history. What can these elements be? Evidently, again, the elements of human nature. History is, then, the development of humanity. Now, what is the first difficulty to which the experimental method yields? It is the infinite number of possible elements of history into which this method must enter, and become necessarily confounded. But if there could be in history no other elements than those of humanity, and if we could in advance, before entering into history, be in possession of all the elements of humanity, we should have gained much; for in commencing history, we should know that in it are to be met only certain elements; we should have already in hand all the pieces of which the machine that we wish to study is composed.

Besides, when we have all the elements, I mean all the essential elements, their relations reveal, as it were, themselves. It is from the nature of the different elements, that are drawn, if not all their possible relations, at least their general and fundamental relations. And what are the general and fundamental relations of things? Montesquieu has said they are the laws of things. *Laws are the necessary relations which spring from the nature of things.* He who raised the greatest historical monument of the last century addressed himself to the nature of things; the essential elements determined, he seized upon their relations; these fundamental relations were to him laws, and these laws once established, he applied them to experience, and transported them into history. In fact, unless the nature of things change in their development, it is necessary that these elements should be found in history with their fundamental relations, that is, with their laws; and from that has resulted *L'Esprit des Lois*.\*

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\* Upon Montesquieu, and *L'Esprit des Lois*, and the principle which

I know what are the inconveniences of this second method: I know that it is possible to believe that we have seized upon the essential elements of human nature, and to have only a system, either too extended or too limited, and consequently false upon one side or the other, and that to impose this system upon history, is to falsify history with a system. I know it, and I hasten to declare, that if there is no other method possible and reasonable than that which I have just exposed, we must be on our guard against its seductions and its inconveniences, in submitting it to the rude and laborious test of the first method; and it is to this which I wish to come.

The experimental method alone is scarcely practicable, and it can conduct us only to the knowledge of what has been, without knowing why it has been. On the other hand, the rational method may conduct us to a false system, which may itself conduct us to a false view of history. But unite the two methods, act like a great physical philosopher, who, in his laboratory, conceives and experiments, experiments and conceives, and makes use at the same time of his senses and his reason. Begin with the method *a priori*, and give to it, as a counterpoise, the method *a posteriori*. The harmony of these two methods\* is, in my eyes, the light by whose aid alone we can wend our way through the labyrinth of history. We must begin by seeking the essential elements of humanity; then, from the nature of these elements, deduce their fundamental relations; from these relations deduce their laws; then, passing to history, ask whether it confirms or repudiates this first work.

If it confirms it, what result would not be obtained! History would then no longer be an accidental succession of systems, of

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serves as the foundation of this great work, see 1st Series, Vol. 1st, Course of 1817, Lecture 22; Vol. 3d, Lecture 1st, and in the present Volume, Lecture 8.

\* In regard to the necessity of uniting the two methods, experimental and rational, see 1st Series, Vol. 2d, *Discours d'ouverture*, and Lecture 1st, *de la vraie méthode*.

schools, of epochs ; that is, of simple chronology, but chronology in a luminous and interesting form ; it would no longer be a series of incoherent words which come one after another, without our knowing why ; it would be a phrase perfectly intelligible, in which all the words presenting a distinct idea form a whole, which itself represents a complete thought. It would be neither an abstract system, nor isolated facts ; it would be a real system, the alliance of the ideal and the real ; something, in short, reasonable. It repels the idea that human reason may have an unreasonable development, that is, a development which is not regular and subjected to laws. But human reason is the foundation even of philosophy. The different elements of human reason, with their relations and with their laws, are what is called philosophy. If, then, all this, in falling into history, is developed there in a reasonable manner, it follows, that after having commenced by philosophy, we shall finish again by philosophy, and that thus we shall arrive at the harmony of philosophy and of the history of philosophy. The history of human reason, or the history of philosophy, will be something reasonable and philosophical ; it will be philosophy itself with all its elements, with all their relations, with all their laws, represented in great and luminous characters in the visible progress of the human race. It seems to me that such a result is well worth the pains of being sought.

To be faithful to the method just exposed, it is necessary first to recognize the elements of human reason.

What are the elements of human reason ; that is, what are the fundamental ideas which preside over its development ? This is the vital question of philosophy. Reason is developed long before it seeks to know how it has been developed ; and in philosophy, as in every thing else, practice precedes theory. Even as one admires, before asking why he admires, as one performs acts of disinterestedness, before having analyzed disinterestedness, so one applies reason before inquiring into its nature, or measuring its capacity. Philosophy or reflection commenced at the moment when, instead of suffering human reason to develop itself

according to its own laws, it demanded an account of itself and of its laws.

The inquiry that we are about to make, in order to be methodically directed, should be divided into three points. First, it is necessary to state, and enumerate in their integrity, the elements or essential ideas of reason. We must have them all, and be sure at the same time that we suppose none, and that we omit none; for if we imagine a single one, a hypothetical element would lead us to hypothetical relations, and thence to a hypothetical system. The first law of a wise method is, then, a complete enumeration. The second is an examination so profound of all these elements that it may result in their reduction, and that we may finish by having in hand the determinate number of elements, simple and indecomposable, which form the boundary of analysis. The third law of method is the examination of the different relations of these elements among themselves. I say the different relations, for these elements may sustain a great number of different relations. None must be supposed, nor must any be neglected. It is when we shall have all these elements, when we shall have reduced them, when we shall have seized upon all their relations, that we shall be in possession of the foundations of reason, and of its history.\*

During the five years which my first course of instruction occupied, I more than once tried the analysis of the essential elements of human reason in metaphysics, in art, in morals, in law, in all parts of philosophy. I do not, then, improvise here, and these rapid words are the result of long studies.†

The rigorous and scientific analysis of the elements of human

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\* See, on these precepts, 1st Series, Vol. 1st, the programme of the course of 1817, and the *Discours d'ouverture*.

† First Series, 1st Vol., course of 1817, 1st Lecture, *des Principes Contingents et nécessaires*; Vol. 2d, Lectures 2-4, *des Principes rationnels*; Lecture 6, *Réduction des Vérités nécessaires*; Lecture 13, *du Beau dans les objets*, page 155; Vol. 4th, Lecture 22, of principles contingent, and principles necessary, according to Reid; Vol. 5th, Lecture 5, examination of the list of the categories of Kant.

reason has been twice seriously undertaken. It belonged to one of the first geniuses by whom humanity has been honored, to the immortal author of *The History of Animals*, to penetrate into the depths of human reason, to search out and describe all its elements. It is about fifty years since Kant renewed this great labor; and of all moderns, he, for method, penetration, and stretch of thought, reminds us most of Aristotle. Aristotle had given to the elements of human reason the celebrated and decried title of Categories. Kant has made use of almost the same vocabulary. It matters very little whether we call the ideas that preside over the development of human reason, Categories, in Greek, or principles of human nature, in English, or whether they be distinguished by some other corresponding expression: it is not words that concern us, but facts. I think that, after Aristotle and Kant, the list of the elements of reason should be closed, and that these two great analysts have exhausted the statistics of reason. But I am far from thinking that the reduction which they have made of these elements is the boundary of analysis, or that they have discerned the fundamental relations of these elements. What are these legitimate elements? What is their reduction? What are their essential relations? These are very grave questions, and I am compelled to run over them briefly.

If I were proceeding analytically, I should enumerate one after the other all the elements of reason. I would demonstrate to you their reality in addressing myself to your consciousness; and when they should be in your consciousness as clearly as in mine, when all these elements should be enumerated, stated, described, I would proceed to their reduction, and to the examination of their relations. But I must go on more rapidly: I must tell you at once that human reason, in whatever manner it is developed, however occupied, whether it stop at the observation of this nature which surrounds us, or whether it dart into the depths of the interior world, conceives all things only under the condition of two ideas. Does it examine numbers and

quantity? it there sees nothing but unity or multiplicity. One and the diverse, one and the multiple, unity and plurality, these are the elementary ideas of reason in regard to number. Does it occupy itself with space? it can consider it only under two points of view: it conceives a space determinate and limited, or the space of all particular spaces, absolute space. Does it occupy itself with existence? does it consider things under this single relation, that they exist? it can conceive only the idea of absolute existence, or of relative existence. Does it think of time? it conceives either a time determinate, time properly so called, or time in itself—absolute time, which is eternity, as absolute space is immensity. Does it think of forms? it conceives a form finite, determinate, limited, measurable, and something which is the principle of this form, and which is neither measurable, nor limited, nor finite; in a word, the infinite. Does it think of movement, of action? it can conceive only bounded actions, forces, causes limited, relative, secondary, or an absolute force, a first cause, beyond which, in regard to action, it is not possible to seek any thing, or find any thing. Does it think of all the phenomena, exterior or interior, which develop themselves before it, of this moving scene of events and accidents of every species? Here, again, it can conceive only two things, manifestation and appearance, or that which, while it appears, still retains something which does not fall into appearance, that is, being in itself, and, to use the language of science, phenomenon and substance. In thought it conceives thoughts relative to this, relative to that which may or may not be, and it conceives the principle of thought, a principle that passes without doubt into all relative thought, but which is not there exhausted. In the moral world, does it perceive any thing beautiful or good? it there irresistibly transports this same category of the finite and the infinite, which becomes the imperfect and the perfect, the ideal beauty, and the real beauty, virtue with the miseries of reality, or holiness in its exaltation and in its unsullied purity.

I should here enlarge in vain; since I am compelled to avoid

analysis, this synthesis is necessarily rapid. Here, then, in my opinion, are all the elements of human reason. The external world, the intellectual world, the moral world, all are subject to these two ideas. The great division of ideas at present established, is the division into contingent ideas and necessary ideas. This division, in a point of view more circumscribed, is the foundation of that which I have just presented to you, and which may be expressed under the different formulas of unity and multiplicity, of substance and phenomenon, of absolute cause and relative causes, of the perfect and the imperfect, of the finite and the infinite.

Each of these propositions has two terms: the one necessary, absolute, single, essential, perfect, infinite; the other, imperfect, phenomenal, relative, multiple, finite. A wise analysis identifies all the second terms among themselves, as well as all the first terms among themselves; it identifies on one hand immensity and eternity, the absolute substance and the absolute cause, the absolute perfection and the absolute unity; and, on the other hand, the multiple, the phenomenal, the relative, the limited, the finite, the bounded, the imperfect.

Behold, then, all the propositions which we had enumerated reduced to a single one, as vast as reason and the possible, to the opposition of unity and plurality, of substance and phenomenon, of being and appearance, of identity and difference, etc.

Having arrived at this reduction, let us examine the relation of these two terms; let us take, as an exemplar proposition, if one may so express himself, unity and multiplicity. What are the relations of these two terms of the same proposition? In what order do we conceive them, acquire them? Do we commence by conceiving the idea of unity, then the idea of diversity; or do we conceive first the idea of diversity, then that of unity? Reflect for a moment, enter an instant into yourselves, and tell me if, as soon as I speak to you of multiplicity, it is possible for you not to conceive of unity; if, when I speak to you of the finite, you do not necessarily conceive the infinite? The reciprocal is



true. When I speak to you of unity, you cannot avoid thinking of variety. When I speak to you of the infinite, you cannot avoid conceiving the finite. We must not say, as is said by two great rival schools,\* that the human mind begins by unity, and the infinite or by the finite, the contingent and the multiple; for if it begins by unity alone, I defy it to arrive ever at multiplicity; or if it starts from multiplicity alone, I defy it equally to arrive ever at unity; if it starts from phenomena alone, it would not arrive at substance; if it starts from the idea of imperfection, it would not arrive at perfection; and reciprocally. The two fundamental ideas to which reason is reduced are, then, two contemporaneous ideas. The one supposes the other in the order of the acquisition of our knowledge. As, then, we do not begin only by the senses and experience, and as we do not any more begin by abstract thought and by intelligence alone, so the human mind begins neither by unity nor by multiplicity; it begins, and cannot avoid beginning, by both; the one is the opposite of the other, a contrary implying its contrary: the one exists only on condition that the other exist at the same time. Such is the order of the acquisition of our knowledge. The order of nature is different.†

Doubtless one of these ideas is inconceivable without the other. But while we do not conceive the one without the other, we cannot any more conceive that in the intrinsic order of things variety can exist without the previous existence of unity. Unity, perfection, the necessary, eternity, absolute space, appear to us the thing real and positive, of which diversity, the finite, the imperfect, the momentary, the successive, are the negation. It is,

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 2, *Discours d'ouverture*, p. 15; and 1st Lecture, p. 87, and following.

† On the distinction of the order of acquisition of our knowledge, and of its logical or ontological order, see the 1st Series, 1st Vol., Course of 1816, p. 134; the programme of the Course of 1817, p. 215, Lecture 8, p. 264; Lecture 12, p. 306; Vol. 2, p. 47, and following; Vol. 4, Lecture 21, p. 444; and 2d Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 17 and 18.

then, unity which is the pre-existent of variety, as affirmation is of negation, as in the other categories being precedes appearance, the first cause precedes the second cause ; the principle of all manifestation precedes all manifestation.

Unity is anterior to variety ; but although one be anterior to the other, once existing, can they be separated ? What is unity taken by itself ? A unity indivisible, a dead unity, a unity which, resting in the depths of its absolute existence, and never developing itself, is for itself, as if it were not. In the same manner, what is variety without unity ? A variety which, not being able to be related to a unity, can never form a totality, nor any collection whatever : it is a series of indefinite quantities, of each of which one cannot say that it is itself, and not another, for this would suppose that it is one, that is, it would suppose the idea of unity ; so that without unity, variety also is as if it were not. Behold what variety or unity isolated would produce : the one is necessary to the other in order to exist with true existence, with that existence which is neither multiple, various, mobile, and negative existence, nor that absolute, eternal, infinite existence, which is, as it were, the negation of existence. Every true existence, every reality, is in the union of these two elements, although essentially the one may be superior and anterior to the other.

You cannot separate variety from unity, nor unity from variety, substance from phenomenon, nor phenomenon from substance ; they necessarily coexist. But how do they coexist ? Unity is anterior to multiplicity ; how, then, has unity been able to admit multiplicity ? Thought cannot conceive the one without the other ; but, in the real order, we have recognized that one is anterior to the other : how, then, is the movement from unity to variety made ? This, then, is the fundamental vice of ancient and modern theories : they place unity on one side, and multiplicity on the other ; the infinite and the finite in such an opposition, that the passage from one to the other seems impossible.

We have identified all the second terms with each other ; we

have also identified all the first terms. And what are these first terms? They are immensity, eternity, infinity, absolute unity. We shall see, hereafter, how the school of Elis,\* in placing itself exclusively in this point of view, at the summit of immensity, of eternity, of being in itself, of infinite substance, has shown that it is impossible, in setting out thence, to arrive at relative being, at the finite, at multiplicity; and it has greatly mocked at those who admitted the existence of the world, which is, after all, only a great multiplicity. The fundamental error of the school of Elis originates from this, that in all the first terms which we have enumerated, it has forgotten one which equals all the others in certainty, and which has a right to the same authority, viz., the idea of cause. Immensity or unity of space, eternity or unity of time, unity of numbers, unity of perfection, the ideal of all beauty, the infinite, the absolute substance, being in itself, is a cause also; not a relative, contingent, finite cause, but an absolute cause. Now, being an absolute cause, it cannot avoid passing into action, it cannot avoid developing itself. If being in itself alone is given, absolute substance without causality, the world is impossible. But if being in itself is also a cause, and an absolute cause, movement and the world naturally follow. The true absolute is not pure being in itself: it is power and cause taken absolutely, which, consequently, creates absolutely,† manifests itself absolutely, and, in developing itself, produces all that you see around you.

I have apparently tormented you with abstractions. I have done what my masters, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant, have done before me. I hope that I shall soon prove to you that these pretended abstractions are the basis of all reality; that these categories, so vain in appearance, are the life of nature, the life of humanity, the life of history.

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\* Vol. 2d of this Series, Lecture 7, and especially *Fragments philosophiques*, Vol. 2d, *Philosophie ancienne*; Xenophanes and Zeno.

† On the creation and its true character, see the much more extended passage of the following lecture, page 102.



## LECTURE V.

## FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF HISTORY.

Recapitulation. Ideas in human reason.—Ideas in the divine intelligence.—Of the true character of the intelligence.—Reply to some objections.—Passage of God into the universe. Of the creation.—Of the universe as a manifestation of divine intelligence, and of the ideas which constitute it. That these ideas pass into the world and produce harmony, beauty, and goodness. Expansion and attraction, etc.—Humanity. Man a microcosm: psychology universal science abridged.—Fundamental fact of consciousness: three terms again, the finite, the infinite, and their relation.—All men possess this fact; their only difference arises from the predominance of such or such an element of this fact, according to the degree of attention paid to it.—That it is the same with the human race. Its identity is that of the three elements of consciousness of the human race. The differences arise from the predominance of one of these over the others. These differences constitute the different epochs of history.

CALL to mind the conclusions of the last lecture. Reason, in whatever way it may occupy itself, can conceive nothing except under the condition of two ideas, which preside over the exercise of its activity: the idea of the unit and of the multiple, of the finite and of the infinite, of being and of appearing, of substance and of phenomenon, of the absolute cause and of secondary causes, of the absolute and of the relative, of the necessary and of the contingent, of immensity and of space, of eternity and of time, etc. Analysis, in bringing together all these propositions, in bringing together, for example, all their first terms, identifies them; it identifies equally all the second terms: so that of all these propositions, compared and combined, it forms a single proposition, a single formula, which is the formula itself of thought, and which you can express, according to the case, by the unit and by the multiple, the absolute being and the relative being, unity and variety, etc. Finally, the two terms of this formula, so comprehensive, does not constitute a dualism in which

the first term is on one side, the second on the other, without any other relation than that of being perceived at the same time by reason. The relation connecting them is quite otherwise essential: unity, being, eternity, etc., the first term of the formula is cause also, and absolute cause; and in so far as absolute cause, it cannot avoid developing itself in the second term—multiplicity, the finite, the relative, etc. The result of all this is, that the two terms, as well as the relation of generation which draws the second from the first, and which without cessation refers it to it, are the three integral elements of reason. It is not in the power of reason, in its boldest abstractions, to separate any of these three terms the one from the others. Try to take away unity, and variety alone is no longer susceptible of addition, it is even no longer comprehensible; or try to take away variety, and you have an immovable unity, a unity which does not make itself manifest, and which, of itself, is not a thought, all thought expressing itself in a proposition, and a single term not sufficing for any proposition; in short, take away the relation which intimately connects variety and unity, and you destroy the necessary tie of two terms of every proposition. We may then regard it as an incontestable point that these three terms are distinct, but inseparable, and that they constitute at the same time a triplicity and an indivisible unity.

Having attained this height, we have lost sight of land, and it becomes us to see where we are; that is, it is necessary to know the nature of these three ideas, which have appeared as the very basis of reason.

What is the nature of ideas? Are ideas simple signs which exist only in the dictionary, mere words, and must one be a nominalist? By no means; for names, words, the signs by the aid of which we think, can be admitted only on condition of comprehending them, and we can comprehend them only on the general condition of comprehension, that of understanding ourselves. Signs are without doubt powerful aids to thought, but they are not the internal principle: it is very clear that thought pre-exists

its expression, that we do not think because we speak,\* but that we speak because we think, and because we have something to say. If we reject nominalism, must we admit that ideas are things which exist like all else, and, as Malebranche says, that they are little beings not to be despised? Not at all. Ideas are not things, are not beings.† Who has seen ideas? Who has touched ideas? If, as I very much doubt, realists have meant to speak of the external existence of ideas, they have fallen into the most evident absurdity. I am tempted not to impute it to them, but it has been charged upon them justly or unjustly. In order to escape, shall we address ourselves to the Conceptualists, and run through the known circle of the three great French schools of the middle age‡ on the question of ideas? it is here that one generally terminates. I myself am ready to admit that ideas are only conceptions of the reason, of the intelligence, of the thought, if you will agree with me on the nature of reason, of intelligence, of thought.

Is reason, strictly speaking, purely human? or rather, is it only so far human as it makes its appearance in man? Does reason belong to you? is it yours? What belongs to you? What is yours? It is only the will and its acts. I wish to move my arm, and I move it: I take such a resolution: this resolution is exclusively mine, I cannot impute it to any of you; it belongs to me, it is my property; and that is so true, that, if I please, I can, at the same instant,

\* Against this theory of Condillac and of M. de Bonald, see 1st Series, Vol. 1st, pp. 157 and 385; Vol. 2d, p. 344; Vol. 3d, pp. 63, 95, and 140; Vol. 4th, Lecture 20, p. 385, and Lecture 21, p. 456; Œuvres de M. de Biran, Vol. 1st, Preface of the Editor, p. xv.; and in this 2d Series, Vol. 3d, Lecture 20.

† Against this absurd realism imputed to ideas, see throughout the 1st Series, Vol. 2d, Lectures 7 and 8, p. 85, and following; Vol. 4th, Lecture 22, p. 461, etc.

‡ On these three schools, see 1st Series, Vol. 4th, Lecture 21, pp. 457-461; in this 2d Series, Vol. 2d, Lecture 9, on Scholasticism. Vol. 3d, Lecture 20, and especially *Fragments philosophiques*. Vol. 3d, on Abelard, where the true and the false of these three schools is discussed and appreciated.

take a contrary resolution, wish another thing, produce another movement, because it is the very essence of my will to be free, to do or not to do, to commence an action or suspend it, or change it when and as I please. Is it the same with the perceptions of reason? Reason conceives a mathematical truth; can it change this conception, as my will changed just now my resolution? Can it conceive that two and two do not make four? Try, and you will not succeed; and not only in mathematics, but in all the other spheres of reason, the same phenomenon takes place. In morals, try to conceive that the just is not obligatory; in art, try to conceive that such or such a form is not beautiful; you will try it in vain, reason will always impose upon you the same conception. Reason does not modify itself according to our taste; you do not think as you wish. All that is free is yours; that which is not free in you is not yours, and liberty is the character of personality. One cannot but smile to hear reason, in our times, spoken of as individual; truly it is a great waste of declamation; for there is nothing less individual than reason; if it were individual, we would master it as we master our resolutions and our wills; we would change at every moment its acts, that is, our conceptions. If these conceptions were only individual, we would not think of imposing them upon another individual; for to impose one's individual and personal conceptions upon another individual, another person, would be the most extravagant despotism. That which is purely individual in me has value only in the limits of my own individuality. But this is not all; in fact, we regard as madmen those who do not admit the mathematical relations of numbers, those who do not admit the difference between the beautiful and the ugly, the just and the unjust. Why? Because we know that it is not the individual that constitutes these conceptions, or, in other terms, that reason in itself is not individual, but universal and absolute; that it is to this authority that it binds all individuals, and that an individual, while he knows that he is obligated by it, knows also that all others must yield to the same authority. Reason is not, then,



individual ; hence it is not ours ; it does not belong to us, is not human ; for again, that which constitutes man and his intrinsic personality, is his voluntary and free activity ; all that which is not voluntary and free is added to man, but is not an integral part of man. If this be admitted, I will grant that ideas are conceptions of this universal and absolute reason which we do not constitute, but which appears in us, and which is the law of all individuals ; that reason which Fenelon found always at the end of all his studies, and which, returning without cessation, in spite of all his efforts, in all his thoughts, the most lofty or the most vulgar, drew from him that sublime conjecture, " O Reason ! Reason ! art thou not that which I seek ?" Reason in itself is universal and absolute, and consequently infallible ; but fallen as it is in man, and thereby in relation with the senses, passions, and imagination, infallible as it was in itself, it becomes fallible. It deceives not itself, but that in which it exists leads it astray ; hence its aberrations : they are numerous ; and as they spring from a relation which, in the present state of things, is our inevitable condition, they are inevitable themselves. Truth misapprehended is, for all that, neither altered nor destroyed ; it subsists independently of reason, which, in its present state, does not perceive it, or perceives it imperfectly. Truth in itself is as independent of our reason as this reason is in itself independent of man in which it appears. Its true subject is universal and absolute reason, that incorruptible intelligence of which ours is a fragment. This is the theory of Plato, of St. Augustine, of Malebranche, of Fenelon, of Bossuet, of Leibnitz.\*

Ideas, then, are not mere words, neither are they beings ; they are conceptions of the human reason : the rigor of analysis compels us to refer them to the eternal principle of human reason, to divine reason ; it is to this reason alone that they belong ; they are only in some manner lent to other reason. It is there that

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 7 and 8, and Lecture 13, p. 345, and following ; Vol. 3, p. 31 ; and 2d Series in this same Volume, Lecture 6, and Vol. 3, Lecture 24.

they exist; but in what manner? In order to discover this it is not necessary to look far; they exist from the existence of spirit; they are nothing else than the manner of existence of eternal reason. Now, the manner of existence of eternal reason and absolute intelligence, is a manner of being entirely intellectual and entirely ideal. Here all discussion ceases; intelligence is explained only by itself; it alone attests and legitimizes its manner of existence. And, remark, that in considering ideas as modes of being of the Eternal Intelligence, you give to this intelligence what is necessary to it in order to be a true intelligence; that is, in order to know itself: for the peculiarity of intelligence is not to be able to know, but to know in truth. On what condition have we intelligence? It is not sufficient that there is in us a principle of intelligence, it is necessary that this intelligence develop itself and take itself as an object of its own intelligence. The necessary condition of intelligence is consciousness,\* that is, difference. There can be knowledge only where there are several terms of which one perceives the other, and at the same time, itself; that is, self-knowledge; that is, self-comprehension; that is, intelligence: intelligence without consciousness is the abstract possibility of intelligence, not intelligence realized; and consciousness implies diversity and difference. Transfer this from human intelligence to absolute intelligence; that is, refer ideas, I mean ideas in the sense of Plato and of Leibnitz, to the only intelligence to which they can belong, and you have, if I may so express myself, the life of divine intelligence, you have that intelligence with the divers and harmonious elements which are necessary to it in order to be a true intelligence.

Let us recapitulate. There are in human reason two distinct elements with their relation: that is to say, three elements, three

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\* This theory of consciousness, as being the necessary form of intelligence, brought here, according to our constant proceeding, from psychology to theodicea, is the foundation of the doctrine, professed throughout this second Series as in the first, of a God personal, different from the world.

ideas. These three ideas are not an arbitrary product of human reason; far from that, they constitute this reason. Now that which is true in reason, humanly considered, subsists in reason considered in itself: that which makes the basis of our reason is the basis of eternal reason, that is, a triplicity which resolves itself into a unity, and a unity which develops itself in triplicity. The unity of this triplicity is alone real; and, at the same time, this unity would entirely perish if confined to one of the three elements which are necessary to it. They are then all of the same value, and constitute an indecomposable unity. What is this unity? Divine intelligence itself. Behold how high, upon the wings of ideas, to speak like Plato, our intelligence elevates itself; behold the thrice holy God whom the human race recognize and adore, and at the sound of whose name the author of the *System of the World* uncovered and bowed his hoary head.

We are here far above the world, above humanity, above human reason. Nature and humanity no longer exist for us; we are in the world of ideas. Is it not permitted to hope that since there is now no question concerning nature, nor even humanity, the preceding theory will no longer be treated as pantheism? Pantheism, at the present time, is the bugbear of feeble imaginations; we shall see hereafter to what it may be reduced; in the mean time, I hope I shall not be accused of confounding with the world the eternal intelligence which, before the world and humanity, exists already by the triple existence inherent in its nature. But if, at this height, philosophy escapes the accusation of pantheism, it will not be spared an accusation quite opposite, that of wishing to penetrate into the depth of the Divine essence, which is said to be incomprehensible. It is declared that God is incomprehensible. Men, reasonable beings, whose nature and destiny is, before every thing else, to know and comprehend, and who believe in the existence of God, wish to believe it only under the express reservation that this existence is incomprehensible. What do they mean by that? Do they mean that it is

absolutely incomprehensible?\* But that which is absolutely incomprehensible can have no relation to our intelligence, and cannot be admitted nor even conjectured by it. A God who is absolutely incomprehensible, is a God who, in regard to us, exists not. In truth, what to us would be a God who had not given to his creature sufficient intelligence to enable this poor creature to lift himself up to him, to know him, and to believe in him? To believe is to know and comprehend in some degree. Faith, whatever may be its form, whatever may be its object, common or sublime, can be nothing else than the consent of reason. That is the foundation of all faith. Take away the possibility of knowing, and the root of faith is taken away. Will it be said that if God is not entirely incomprehensible, he is so a little, he is somewhat so, he is so in some respects? That is true, and it is on account of this very thing that darkness and faint-heartedness mingle with the most lively faith, so that the measure of the comprehensibility of God is precisely that of our faith.

I will go further, and to this pusillanimous mysticism I will reply from the height of Christian orthodoxy. Do you know what is the theory I have stated to you? It is nothing less than Christianity. The God of Christians is threefold, and at the same time one; and the accusations which would be raised against the doctrine which I teach, would extend even to the Christian Trinity. The dogma of the Trinity is the revelation of the Divine essence, illuminated in its whole depth, and brought entirely within the reach of thought. It does not appear that Christianity believes the explanation of the Divine essence inaccessible and interdicted to human intelligence, since it has caused it to be taught to the most humble minds, and since it has made it the first of the truths which it inculcates to its children. But what! will it be said—You forget that this truth is a mystery? No; I do not forget it, but let it not be forgotten also that this mystery is

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\* On the comprehensibility and incomprehensibility of God, see note 1 at the end of this Lecture.

a truth. Besides, I will explain myself clearly in regard to it. Mystery is a word which belongs not to the language of philosophy, but to that of religion. Mysticism is the necessary form of all religion; but this form covers ideas which may be approached and comprehended in themselves. And I only repeat what has been said long before me by the greatest doctors of the Church, St. John of Damascus, St. Anselm, and Bossuet himself.\* These great men have attempted an explanation of the mysteries, and, among others, of the mystery of the most holy Trinity. Then this mystery, all holy and sacred as it was, in their eyes contained ideas which it was possible to disengage from their form. This form is borrowed from human relations the most intimate and most touching. But if it is holy, the ideas which are beneath it are also holy, and these are the ideas which philosophy searches out, and which it considers in themselves. Let us leave to religion the form that is inherent in it; it will always here find respect the most profound and most true: but at the same time, without touching the rights of religion, already I have defended, and will constantly defend, those of philosophy. Again, the form of religion and that of philosophy are different; but at the same time the contents, if I may so express it, of religion and of philosophy are the same. Where there is identity of contents, it is puerile to insist, in a hostile manner, on difference of form. Religion is the philosophy of the human race; a small number of men go still further; but, in considering the essential harmony of religion and philosophy, every true philosopher surrounds with veneration religion and its forms: he does not revere it by a sort of indulgence which would be much out of place; he reveres it

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\* For all authority I limit myself to recalling, that the Catechism of Meaux, intended for children, thus defines the Son of God. "Le fils de dieu est la parole interieure de son père, sa pensée éternellement subsistante et de même nature que lui." Catechism of Montpellier: "Le père ne peut pas subsister un seul moment sans se connaître: et en se connaissant il produit son fils, le verbe éternel. Le père et le fils ne peuvent subsister un seul moment sans s'aimer, et en s'aimant ils produisent le Saint Esprit." See also the *Elevations* of Bossuet.

sincerely, because it is the sacred form of truth. (Applause.) Excuse, gentlemen, these developments, excessive, perhaps; for I must hasten upon the long career which is before me.

It is necessary to advance, to go from God to the universe. But how can we go there, and what leads from God to the universe? The creation. And what is creation? The ordinary definition is to create, that is, to make something from nothing; that is, to draw out from nothing. Let us examine a little this definition;\* it rests upon the idea of nothingness. But what is this idea? An idea purely negative, or rather, an hypothesis which embodies a contradiction. Nothing is the negation of all existence; but who made this negation? Who? Thought, that is to say, you who think, and who exist, inasmuch as you think and since you think, and who know it since you know that you think; so that the principle even of your hypothesis destroys it. What has been said of doubt applies, and with stronger reason, to the idea of nothingness. To doubt is to believe, for to doubt is to think. Does he who doubts believe that he doubts, or does he doubt that he doubts? If he doubts that he doubts, he destroys by that same act his skepticism: if he believes that he doubts, he destroys it still. In the same way, to think is to exist and to know that one exists; it is to affirm existence: now, to make the hypothesis of nothingness, is to think, then it is to exist and know that one exists; then it is to make the hypothesis of nothing on condition of a contrary supposition, that of the existence of thought, and of the existence of him who thinks. Vainly does one seek to escape thought and existence. At the bottom of every negation lies an affirmation; at the bottom of every hy-

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\* This definition is bad or good according to the manner in which it is understood. Christianity, in saying that God drew the world from nothing, has never meant any thing else except that to create the world God made no use of pre-existing matter, as paganism believes; and production without pre-existing matter is in fact true creation, the type of which is given to us in our voluntary and free power, which creates, to speak properly, since it produces acts which were not in any manner, or under any form, before that the will gave them being.

pothesis of nothing, as its absolute condition, is the supposition of existence.

Let us leave hypotheses: let us take up again the method which we have always followed, that method which borrows from human consciousness what afterwards it will apply to divine essence.\* To create is a thing not difficult to be conceived, for it is a thing that we do every moment; in short, we create every time that we perform a free act. I will. I take a resolution, I take another, then another still; I modify it, I suspend it, I pursue it, etc. What is it that I do? I produce an effect which I refer to myself as the cause, and only cause; and in regard to the existence to this effect I seek nothing beyond myself. We create a free act; we create it, I say, for we refer it to no principle other than ourselves; we impute it to ourselves, and to ourselves alone. It existed not; and now it begins to exist by virtue of the causative power which we possess. This, then, is to create; but with what? with nothing? No, doubtless; but, on the contrary, we create with the foundation even of our existence. Man draws not from nothing the action which he has not yet performed, but is about to perform. He draws it from the very reason which he has to perform it. Divine creation is of the same nature. God, in creating the universe, draws it not from nothing, which exists not, which cannot exist, which is a mere word: he draws it from himself, from this power of causation and of creation, of which we possess a feeble portion: and all the difference between our creation and that of God, is the general difference between God and man, the difference between supreme and absolute cause, and a relative and secondary cause.

I produce an effect, but this effect ceases under the eye even of him who produces it; it extends scarcely beyond consciousness: often it there dies; never does it go much beyond it; my causative power easily finds limits. These limits within are my

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\* On the psychological method applied to the theodicea, see the 1st Series, *passim*, especially Vol. 2, Lecture 23, *Dieu, principe de l'idée du bien*, and Lecture 24, pp. 384-394.

passions, my weaknesses; without, they are the world itself, which becomes an obstacle to my movement. I wish to produce a movement, and often I produce only the volition of a movement: the most pitiable accident paralyzes my arm; the most common obstacle opposes my power; and my creations, like my creative power, are relative, contingent, limited: but, in fine, they are creations, and the type of the conception of the divine creation.

God creates, then, by virtue of his creative power: he draws the world, not from nothing, which is not, but from himself, who is absolute existence. His prominent character being an absolute creative force, which cannot avoid exercise, it follows, not only that creation is possible, but that it is necessary.\* Further, God creates with himself; then he creates with all the qualities which we have recognized in him, and which necessarily pass into his creations. God is in the universe as the cause is in its effect; as we ourselves, feeble and limited causes, are in the feeble and limited effects which we produce. And if we recognize God as the unity of being, of intelligence, and of power, with the variety which is inherent in him, and with the relation just as necessary as the two terms which he unites, all these characteristics must be found in the world, and in visible existence. Then creation is not an evil; it is a good: and thus the Holy Scriptures represent it to us—"He saw that it was good." Why? Because it was more or less conformed to himself.

Behold the universe—created, and manifesting him who created it; but this manifestation, in which the principle of manifestation makes its appearance, does not exhaust it. I explain myself.

I will to act, and I produce an action: my voluntary force appears by this act, and in this action: it appears in it, because to it I refer this action; it is in it, then; but how is it in it? Is it entirely absorbed by it, so that there remains no longer any

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\* On the true sense in which it is necessary to understand the necessity of creation, see, at the end of this Lecture, note 2.



thing of it? No, and that is so true, that after having performed such an act, I perform a new one, I modify it, I change it. So if God is in the world, if God is in it with all the elements which constitute his being, he is neither absorbed nor exhausted; and after having produced this world, he remains not less entire in his unity, and his eternal essence.

It is in this double point of view of the manifestation of God in this world, and in the subsistence of the divine essence in itself, although it be manifested in the world, that exists the true relation of the world to God, a relation which is at the same time a relation of resemblance and of difference; for it is impossible that God, in manifesting himself, should not to a certain point pass into his manifestation; and at the same time it is impossible that the principle of a manifestation should not remain different from the manifestation which it produces by all the difference between cause and effect. The universe is, then, an imperfect reflection, but a reflection of the divine essence.\*

I do not wish here to search out the intellectual laws, hidden under ordinary physical laws. But do not all men, the ignorant as well as the learned, see in the universe a constant harmony? Can one deny that there is harmony in the movements of the world? This would be to deny that the world endures; that it endures two minutes, for if there were not harmony in the movements of the world, the world would be destroyed. Now, evidently, harmony supposes unity, but not unity alone. There is already variety in harmony, and, moreover, there is a relation between variety and unity; there is a mingling of unity and variety in a perfect measure: this is the harmony of life and of the universe. Behold, then, why you find the world a beautiful thing: it is the intimate relation between unity and variety, which makes the beauty of this world: it is the same relation which, in making its existence, its duration, and its

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\* On God present in the world, and distinct from the world, see note 8, at the end of this Lecture.

beauty, makes also the beneficent character of its laws : for these laws, harmonious in themselves, produce and spread harmony all around. These, however, are but generalities. Let us enter into details, let us run over the different spheres into which science has divided the world, and you will find there the same characters that the general aspect of nature has offered you. Take mechanics, astronomy, general physics ; what do you find in them ? Two forces, centripetal and centrifugal, at the same time opposed and united together. The law of matter is infinite divisibility, that is, universal expansion. Infinite divisibility is nothing else than the movement of unity into variety conceived without limits. Suppose that it be really without limits ; do you know what would be the consequence ? The dissolution of all things. In fact, if infinite divisibility has no counterpoise, every thing must be infinitely divided and subdivided : the elements that result from this infinite subdivision must themselves be infinitely subdivided. If this divisibility be not arrested, there is no longer any contiguity in space, nor continuity in time ; there are no more distinct elements ; there is no longer any thing but indefinite quantities, which defy all numeration, all composition, all addition. This law, this tendency to infinite divisibility, certainly exists in the world, but how is it there ? With another law, that of universal attraction. Attraction is the return of variety to unity, as expansion is the movement of unity to variety. And it is because these two universal laws are in relation to each other, and form a counterpoise and equilibrium ; in a word, because they are in harmony, that the world subsists two minutes in succession. Go from mechanics, from astronomy, and from physics to chemistry, to vegetable and animal physiology, and you will find these two movements and their relation : cohesion and its opposite, assimilation and its opposite, and the intimate relation which connects them. I insist no more upon this subject : already, in France, these great results of natural science begin to be visible by the labors of scientific detail, and to agitate all thinking minds. Already is commencing among us a phi-

losophy of nature, more advanced, perhaps, elsewhere, but more hypothetical ; here more circumspect, and with a more glorious future. I am contented to trace out to you some features of this great picture ; and I arrive at humanity.

Nothing perishes in universal life ; every thing is metamorphosed, and assumes a new appearance. Mechanics and physics pass into chemistry, which in its turn passes into vegetable physiology, which also has its place in animal economy. All these degrees of life are found in humanity. Humanity is all that, and still more—it is the knowledge of it all ; it is the constituent elements of all existence brought under the eyes of consciousness.

The study of consciousness is the study of humanity. The study of consciousness, in philosophic language, is called psychology. If man sums up in himself the entire world as the entire world reflects God ; if all the movements of the divine essence pass into the world and return into the consciousness of man, you may judge of the high rank of man in the creation, and consequently of psychology in science. Man is a universe in miniature : psychology is universal science concentrated. Psychology contains and reflects all, that which is of God and that which is of the world, under the precise and determinate angle of consciousness ; there every thing is within a narrow compass, but every thing is there. In consciousness there are thousands and thousands of phenomena without doubt, as in the exterior world : but in the same way as the exterior world may be summed up in two great laws and in their relation, so all the facts of consciousness may be summed up, and are summed up, in one constant, permanent, universal fact, which subsists in all possible circumstances, which has a place in the consciousness of the peasant, as in that of Leibnitz, which is in all consciousness, under the single condition that it be an act of consciousness. This is a fact, the most common and the most sublime : the most common, because it is in all consciousness ; the most sublime, because it involves the most important consequences.

There is a psychological art, for reflection is, thus to speak,

contrary to nature, and this art is not learned in a single day one does not fall back within himself without long exercise, habitual perseverance, a long apprenticeship. Instead, then, of entering here upon a profound analysis of the fact of consciousness, which you would have some trouble to follow, I will content myself with presenting to you the general character of this fact.\* Fear nothing, I shall be short.

So long as man knows not himself, he knows nothing; for we can know only inasmuch as we know that we exist: all knowledge whatever implies the knowledge of self, not, without doubt, a developed knowledge, but that knowledge which consists at least in knowing that we exist. So long as man knows not himself, he is as if he existed not; but from the moment that he knows himself, he does it on condition that he knows every thing else, in the same manner as he knows himself. All is given in all; and man, in perceiving himself, perceives already all that he will afterwards reach, by the closest inspection.

When I perceive myself, I distinguish myself from all that is not myself; and in distinguishing myself from what is not myself, I do two things: 1st, I affirm myself as existing; 2d, I affirm as existing that from which I distinguish myself. I am the *me*. I am that *me* which confounds itself with nothing foreign to itself, only on condition of distinguishing *me* from every thing else; and to distinguish self from something is to suppose the existence of that from which it is distinguished. Man, then, finds himself only in finding something that surrounds him, and consequently limits him. Enter a moment into yourselves, and you will acknowledge that the *me* which you are is a *me* limited on all sides by foreign objects. But if the exterior world limits the *me*, and becomes an obstacle to it in every sense, the *me* also acts upon the world, modifies it, opposes itself to its action, and impresses its own upon it in some degree; and this degree, however feeble it may

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\* On this primitive and permanent fact, see the sketch which is at the end of Vol. 2 of the 1st Series, p. 403, *du Fait de Conscience*, and p. 419; *du premier et du dernier Fait de Conscience*.

be, becomes for the world a boundary, a limit. Behold the mutual opposition in which we lay hold upon ourselves. This opposition is permanent in consciousness, it lasts as long as there is consciousness. But after all, this opposition resolves itself into one and the same notion, that of the finite. This *me* that we are is finite; the *not me* which limits it is itself finite; they are so in different degrees, but they are equally so; we are then still in the sphere of the finite. Is there nothing else in consciousness?

Yes, at the same time that consciousness seizes the *me* as finite, in opposition to the *not me*, finite itself, it stops neither at the one nor at the other; it sets out thence to conceive a being that has all the characters opposed to those which the *me* finds in itself, and in the *not me* which is analogous to it. This being is absolute, as the *me* and the *not me* are relative; it is a necessary substance, as the *me* and the *not me* are contingent substances. Besides, it is not only a substance, it is a cause also. In fine, the *me* seizes itself only in its acts, as a cause that acts upon the exterior world; and the exterior world arrives at its knowledge of the *me* only by the impressions which it makes upon it, by the sensations which the *me* experiences, which it cannot destroy, which it cannot then refer to itself, and which it refers then to some foreign cause: this foreign cause is the world; it is a finite cause, and the *me* also is a finite cause. The necessary substance, common principle of the *me* and of the *not me*, is, then, a cause also, and it is consequently by its nature an infinite cause.

It is not in the power of man to destroy a single one of these three terms of the fact of consciousness. It is the stuff of which all our ideas, all our convictions are made; at every moment, and in all the most common circumstances of our existence, we believe that we exist, we believe that there is an exterior world that exists also, and that is, like ourselves, limited and finite; and we refer both this world and ourselves to something better, beyond which it is impossible to conceive any thing, in fact, of existence and power. The consciousness has, then, three motive princi-

ples, like nature, like the divine essence itself; it achieves the one and manifests the other.

The identity of consciousness constitutes the identity of human knowledge. It is upon this common basis that time designs all the differences which distinguish man from man. The three terms of consciousness there form a primitive synthesis more or less confused. Often man remains there captive, and this is the case with the most part of men. Sometimes he gets out of it, he adds analysis to this primitive synthesis, he disengages it in submitting it to the light of reflection, which, in shedding itself successively upon each of the three terms of consciousness, illuminates the one by the other; and then man knows better what he already knew. There is no other difference between man and man.

Such is the superiority of reflection and of human science over the primitive beliefs of consciousness: it is no greater. Add that it may happen that reflection, which is successive, occupies itself turn by turn with one of the terms of consciousness, preoccupied with one, stops upon it, and neglects the others, substitutes for synthesis a confused but complete perception of consciousness, an imperfect analysis, an exclusive science.

What I say of the individual, I say of the human race. I have vindicated the individual and human nature; I have rendered homage to Providence in showing in the consciousness of the most common men the three terms which are in the most developed scientific reflection, which are in nature, which are in God himself. The only difference between man and man is the more or less clearness in the manner of rendering to himself an account of these elements. It is the same with the human race. The human race, in the first generation as in the last, possesses, neither more nor less, the three elements which we have designated. It is not in the power of time to produce a fourth. In this consists the unity and identity of the human race. But there is no history of that which is one, identical in itself, permanent, without change, without movement; if the human race were always

identical with itself, if it sustained not relatively with itself grave differences, it would have no history, for there is no history except of that which changes. Variety in unity is the element of history. The power of variety in the hands of time, and upon the theatre of history, produces on a large scale that which passes on a small one upon the limited theatre of individual consciousness. The human race sustains with itself, in the course of its destiny, the same differences which the individual sustains relatively with himself in the limits of his own. The human race, which has always in permanence the three fundamental elements of consciousness, admits also differences in the degree of clearness with which it recognizes them, and in the degree of attention which it directs sometimes upon one and sometimes upon the other. The characteristic differences which divide the development of the consciousness of the individual are the different epochs of his life. The differences which the human race undergoes, in its development, are the epochs of the life of the human race, that is, the distinct epochs of history.

Now what are, what ought to be, the different epochs of history? and in what order do they succeed each other? In order to know this, it is evident that it is necessary to recognize in what order are developed the differences which we have designated in the consciousness of the human race, and in that of the individual. Is it the idea of the infinite which first occupies humanity, or the idea of the finite? and in the latter case, which of the two terms of the finite occupy it first? It is that, indeed, which it concerns us to know with precision, in order to be able to determine definitely the order of the great epochs of history: to the examination and solution of this problem shall our next lecture be devoted.





## APPENDIX TO THE FIFTH LECTURE.

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NOTE 1, page 90.

OF THE COMPREHENSIBILITY AND THE INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF  
GOD.

WE here combat the interested assertion of the enemies of philosophy, that God is incomprehensible, and that it is not then for reason, and for the philosophy which it represents, to explain God. Elsewhere, we have established in some manner, it may be admitted, at once the comprehensibility and the incomprehensibility of God. First Series, vol. fourth, Lecture twelfth, p. 12. We say at first that God is not absolutely incomprehensible, for this manifest reason, that being the cause of this universe, he passes into it, and is reflected in it, as the cause in the effect; therefore we recognize him. "The heavens declare his glory,"\* and "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made;"† his power, in the thousands of worlds sown in the boundless regions of space: his intelligence in their harmonious laws; finally, that which there is in him most august, in the sentiments of virtue, of holiness, and of love which the heart of man contains. It must be that God is not incomprehensible to us, for all nations have petitioned him, since the first day of the intellectual life of humanity. God, then, as the cause of the universe, reveals

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\* The Psalmist.

† St. Paul.

himself to us ; but God is not only the cause of the universe, he is also the perfect and infinite cause, possessing in himself, not a relative perfection, which is only a degree of imperfection, but an absolute perfection, an infinitude which is not only the finite multiplied by itself in those proportions which the human mind is able always to enumerate, but a true infinitude, that is, the absolute negation of all limits, in all the powers of his being. Moreover, it is not true that an indefinite effect adequately expresses an infinite cause ; hence it is not true that we are able absolutely to comprehend God by the world and by man, for all of God is not in them. In order absolutely to comprehend the infinite, it is necessary to have an infinite power of comprehension, and that is not granted to us. God, in manifesting himself, retains something in himself which nothing finite can absolutely manifest ; consequently, it is not permitted us to comprehend absolutely. There remains, then, in God, beyond the universe and man, something unknown, impenetrable, incomprehensible. Hence in the immeasurable spaces of the universe, and beneath all the profundities of the human soul, God escapes us in this inexhaustible infinitude, whence he is able to draw without limit new worlds, new beings, new manifestations. God is to us, therefore, incomprehensible ; but even of this incomprehensibility we have a clear and precise idea ; for we have the most precise idea of infinitude. And this idea is not for us a metaphysical refinement, it is a simple and primitive conception which shines for us from our entrance into this world, luminous and obscure together, explaining every thing, and being explained by nothing, because it carries us at first to the summit and the limit of all explanation. There is something inexplicable for thought, behold then whither thought tends ; there is infinite being, behold then the necessary principle of all relative and finite beings. Reason explains not the inexplicable, it conceives it. It is not able to comprehend infinitude in an absolute manner, but it comprehends it in some degree in its indefinite manifestations, which reveal it, and which veil it ; and, further, as it has been said, it

comprehends it so far as incomprehensible. It is, therefore, an equal error to call God absolutely comprehensible, and absolutely incomprehensible. He is both, invisible and present, revealed and withdrawn in himself, in the world and out of the world, so familiar and intimate with his creatures, that we see him by opening our eyes, that we feel him in feeling our hearts beat, and at the same time inaccessible in his impenetrable majesty, mingled with every thing, and separated from every thing, manifesting himself in universal life, and causing scarcely an ephemeral shadow of his eternal essence to appear there, communicating himself without cessation, and remaining incommunicable, at once the living God, and the God concealed, "*Deus vivus et Deus obconditus.*"

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NOTE 2, page 94.

OF THE TRUE SENSE IN WHICH MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THE NECESSITY OF CREATION.

THOUGHT in vain shuns the exclusive, speech encounters it inevitably because it is successive, and because in saying one thing it does not at the same time say another, which would be particularly necessary in order to explain the first, and put it in its true light. Does one wish to combat an arbitrary and capricious creation, unworthy of the divine nature? one runs the risk of falling, in appearance at least, into fatalism. Thus, this passage on the necessity of creation must be guarded by other passages, before and after it, in which it is established with the last degree of precision, that the necessity in question is not a physical necessity, but a metaphysical and moral necessity; that, consequently, it no more destroys the liberty of God than the metaphysical and moral necessity of good, that is, obligation, destroys our liberty.

*Philosophical Fragments*, third edition, Preface: "On reflection, I find this expression (necessity of creation) somewhat irrev-

erential towards God, whose liberty it has the appearance of compromising, and I do not hesitate to retract it; but in retracting I ought to explain it. It covers no mystery of fatalism; it expresses an idea which is everywhere found, among the most saintly doctors as well as among the greatest philosophers. God, like man, acts, and can act only, in conformity to his nature, and even his liberty is relative to his essence. Now, in God especially, the force is adequate to the substance, and the divine force is always in action: God is then essentially active and creative. It follows hence, that, far from despoiling God of his nature and his essential perfections, it is very necessary to admit that a power essentially creative could not but create, as a power essentially intelligent could create only with intelligence, as a power essentially wise and good could create only with wisdom and goodness. The word necessity expresses nothing else. It is inconceivable that from this word some may have wished to draw, and to impute to me, universal fatalism. What! because I relate the action of God to his very substance, do I consider this action as blind and fatal! What, is it impiety to put one attribute of God, liberty, in harmony with all his other attributes, and with the divine nature itself! What, does piety and orthodoxy consist in subjecting all the attributes of God to a single one, so that where the great masters have written—The eternal laws of the divine justice, it will be necessary to put—The arbitrary decrees of God; so that where they have written—It was in accordance with the nature of God, with his wisdom, with his goodness, etc., to act in such or such a manner, it will be necessary to substitute that it neither agreed nor disagreed with his nature, but that it pleased him arbitrarily to do thus! It is the doctrine of Hobbes upon human legislation, transferred to divine legislation. More than two thousand years ago Plato anathematized this doctrine, and pushed it in the *Euthyphron* to the most impious absurdities. St. Thomas combated it after it reappeared in Christian Europe; and one might have thought that it had perished under the consequences which the intrepid logic of Occam had drawn from it.

But let us go to the root of the evil, to wit, an incomplete and vicious theory of liberty. It is here that the power of psychology shines forth. Every psychological error carries with it the gravest errors; and if we are deceived in regard to human liberty, we are, consequently, almost necessarily deceived in regard to the liberty of God. Without vain subtilty, there is a real distinction between arbitrary freedom and liberty. Arbitrary freedom, is volition with the appearance of deliberation between different objects, and under this supreme condition, that when, as a consequence of deliberation, we resolve to do this or that, we have the immediate consciousness of having been able, and of being able still, to will the contrary. It is in volition, and in the retinue of phenomena which surround it, that liberty more energetically appears, but it is not thereby exhausted. It is at rare and sublime moments in which liberty is as much greater as it appears less to the eyes of a superficial observation. I have often cited the example of d'Assas. D'Assas did not deliberate; and for all that, was d'Assas less free, did he not act with entire liberty? Has not the saint who, after a long and painful exercise of virtue, has come to practice, as it were by nature, the acts of self-renunciation which are repugnant to human weakness; has not the saint, in order to have gone out from the contradictions and the anguish of this form of liberty which we call volition, fallen below it instead of being elevated above it; and is he any thing more than a blind and passive instrument of grace, as Luther and Calvin have inappropriately wished to call it, by an excessive interpretation of the Augustinian doctrine? No, freedom still remains; and far from being annihilated, its liberty, in being purified, is elevated and ennobled; from the human form of volition it has passed to the almost divine form of spontaneity. Spontaneity is essentially free, although it may be accompanied with no deliberation, and although often, in the rapid motion of its inspired action, it escapes its own observation, and leaves scarcely a trace in the depths of consciousness. Let us transfer this exact psychology to the theodicea, and we may recognize without hypothe-

sis, that spontaneity is also especially the form of God's liberty. Yes, certainly, God is free; for, among other proofs, it would be absurd that there should be less freedom in the first cause than in one of its effects, humanity; God is free, but not with that liberty which is related to our double nature, and made to contend against passion and error, and painfully to engender virtue and our imperfect science; he is free, with a liberty that is related to his own divine nature, that is, a liberty unlimited, infinite, recognizing no obstacle. Between justice and injustice, between good and evil, between reason and its contrary, God cannot deliberate, and, consequently, cannot will after our manner. Can one conceive, in fact, that he could take what we call the bad part? This very supposition is impious. It is necessary to admit that when he has taken the contrary part, he has acted freely without doubt, but not arbitrarily, and with the consciousness of having been able to choose the other part. His nature, all-powerful, all-just, all-wise, is developed with this spontaneity which contains liberty altogether, and excludes at once the efforts and the miseries of volition, and the mechanical operation of necessity. Such is the principle and the true character of the divine action."

*The Thoughts of Pascal*, Preface: "There is, as the schools say, two kinds of necessity—physical necessity and moral necessity. The question is not raised here of the physical necessity of creation; for, in this hypothesis, God, we say it for the hundredth time, would be without liberty, that is, below man. There remains, then, the moral necessity of creation, that is, a sovereign fitness; and I wish to repeat the explanation which I have already given of it, and which, with a lamentable skill, has always been suppressed. I am free, and that, for me, is an invincible demonstration that God is free, and possesses all that is essential in my liberty, and in a supreme degree, without the limits which passion and a bounded intelligence impose upon me. The divine liberty does not recognize the miseries of my liberty, does not recognize its troubles, its uncertainties; it is naturally united to the divine intelligence and goodness. God was able to create or not to cre-

ate the world and man, even as I am able to make such or such a choice. Tell me, is that clear, and do you find me sufficiently explicit in regard to the liberty of God? Behold the knot of the difficulty—God was perfectly free to create or not to create, but why has he created? God has created because he has found creation to be more in conformity with his wisdom and his goodness. Creation is not an arbitrary decree of God, as Occam thought; it is an act perfectly free in itself, without doubt, but an act founded in reason: it is very necessary to admit this. Because God decided on creation, he preferred it; and he preferred it because it appeared to him better than the contrary. And if it appeared better to his wisdom, it was then, in accordance with that wisdom, armed with omnipotence, to produce that which appeared the best. This is my optimism; accuse it as much as you please of atheism and of fatalism, you are not able to carry this accusation against me without equally making it fall upon Leibnitz, without speaking of St. Thomas, and many others; and I consent to be a fatalist and an atheist like Leibnitz. The God who made me was surely able not to make me, and my existence was not wanting to his perfection. But, on the other hand, if, creating the world, he had not created my soul, this soul which is able to comprehend him and love him, the creation would have been imperfect; for, in reflecting God in some of his attributes, it would not have manifested those that are greatest and most holy; for example, liberty, justice, and love; and, on the other hand, it was good that there should be a world, a theatre where this being, capable of elevating itself to God through passions and miseries that abase it towards the earth, might be able to display itself. All things, then, are as God has made them, and as they are. Hence, I conclude, be not displeased, that God, without undergoing any restraint, remaining free and perfectly free, but not being able to find it better to create than not to create, created not only with wisdom, but even in virtue of his wisdom, and that thus, in this great act, intelligence and love directed liberty."

*Fragments of the Cartesian Philosophy. Vanini.*—"God, by his reason, and, above all (I hasten to say it, with Plato), by his goodness, saw that it was good to create the world and man; at the same time, he was free to create or not to create, and not to follow his reason and his goodness; but he followed both, even because it is right and good. In him in whom every thing is infinite, intelligence, goodness, and liberty are equally infinite; and in him who is the supreme unity, intelligence, goodness, and liberty are infinitely united; so that it is impious to place in the divine liberty the miseries of our uncertainties and our interior struggles. In man, diversity of the powers of the soul is betrayed by discord and difficulty. Different powers, intelligence, goodness, or love, and free activity, are already of necessity in the author of humanity, but carried to their supreme power, to their infinite power, distinct and united together in the life of the eternal unity. The theodicea is placed between the quicksand of an extravagant anthropomorphism and that of an abstract deism; the true God is a living God, a real being, all of whose attributes, distinct and inseparable, are developed in conformity with the infinite nature, without effort and without combat. Take away the divine intelligence, and the conception of the plan of these numberless worlds is impossible. Deprive God of his goodness and his love, and creation becomes superfluous for him who has need of nothing, and is sufficient for himself. Deprive God of his liberty, and the world and man are no longer any thing but the product of a fatal, and, in some sort, mechanical action, like the rain which falls from the clouds, or like the stream which flows from its fountain. Man that is free can have for his cause only a free cause; man capable of loving has a father who also loves; man endowed with intelligence bears witness to a supreme intelligence. This induction, so simple and so solid, borrowed from a severe psychology, and forming the foundation of a sublime theodicea; this induction, so old in humanity, so recent in science, and yet so violently combated by different adversaries, must not be sought in the sixteenth century, and in Vanini. Our



philosophy has more than once wandered into a labyrinth of difficulties, of objections, and of accumulated responses in regard to creation. At bottom, it denies the divine liberty, and that by a deplorable confounding of intelligence and action. It sees well that God has necessarily conceived, as in accordance with his wisdom and his goodness, the creation of a world which should bear some signs of him, and, above all, of a being made in his own image; but from this necessity, entirely intellectual and entirely moral, it concludes the necessity of action, which appears logical, and yet is contrary to the most manifest facts which take place in us, and contrary to the most certain facts given by the most simple psychology."

*Course of Lectures on the History of Modern Philosophy, first Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 23, page 348:* "If man is free, is it possible that God may not be free? No one contends that he who is the cause of all things, who has for the cause of himself only himself, can depend upon any thing whatever. But in freeing God from every exterior constraint, Spinoza subjected him to an interior and mathematical necessity, in which he finds the perfection of being. Yes, of being which is not a person, but the essential character of personal being is precisely liberty. If, then, God were not free, God would be inferior to man. Would it not be strange that the creature should have this marvellous power of disposing of himself, of choosing and freely willing, and that the being who has made him should be subjected to a necessary development, the cause of which is only in himself, without doubt, but the cause of which is a sort of abstract, mechanical, or metaphysical power, of little importance, but inferior to the personal and voluntary cause which we are, and of which we have the clearest consciousness? God is free because we are free; for God is at once all of what we are, and nothing of what we are. He possesses the same attributes which we possess, but elevated to the infinite. He possesses an infinite liberty, joined to an infinite intelligence; and as his intelligence is infallible, exempt from the uncertainties of deliberation, and perceiving at a single

glance wherein is good, so his liberty is accomplished spontaneously and with no effort."

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NOTE 3, page 95.

GOD PRESENT IN THE WORLD, AND DISTINCT FROM THE WORLD.

IN the knotty question of the relations of God to the world, we have constantly endeavored to shun the double error of supposing a God of whom there may be no visible trace in the world, and a God so passed into the world, that he may not be different from it; the dead God of the schools, and the grosser God of pantheism. Such has constantly been our double purpose: we have marked it so strongly, that it could not escape an attentive, impartial mind. But as one is not able to say every thing at once, and in the same indivisible moment, when we have combated the abstract God of the schools, we have seemed to incline to pantheism; and when we have combated pantheism, other persons have accused us of returning to a theodicea without criticism. We ourselves will here bring together different passages, which, taken apart, are perhaps excessive, and which, reunited, temper each other, and reciprocally explain each other.

1. Against the abstract God of the schools, behold a passage in which the fear of abstraction is thrown into the opposite excess.

*Philosophical Fragments*, Preface of the first edition: "The God of consciousness is not an abstract God, a solitary king exiled far away from the creation, upon the desert throne of a silent eternity, and of an absolute existence which resembles the denial itself of existence: he is a God at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance, and always cause, being substance only, so far as cause, and cause only, so far as substance; that is, being cause absolute, one of several, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and

totality, principle, end, and midst, at the summit of being, and at its humblest degree, infinite and finite together, triple, in fine, that is, at once God, nature, and humanity. In fact, if God is not in every thing, he is in nothing; if he is absolutely indivisible in himself, he is inaccessible; and consequently he is incomprehensible, and his incomprehensibility is for us his destruction.\* Incomprehensible as formula, and in the schools, God appears in the world which manifests him, and for the soul which possesses him and feels him."

Other passages :

First Series, Vol. 2, p. 109 : "There is a very simple means of delivering the Theodicea from every shade of anthropomorphism : it is to reduce God to an abstraction, to the abstraction of being in itself. Being in itself, it is true, is free from all division, but upon this condition, that it can have no attribute, no quality, and even that it may be deprived of perception and intelligence. . . ."

Ibid., p. 114 : "By dint of a desire to free God from all the conditions of finite existence, mysticism takes away from him the conditions of existence itself; it so much fears that the infinite may have something in common with the finite, that it refuses to acknowledge that being is common to either, except the difference of degree, as if all that does not exist, were not in fact nothing! Absolute being possesses absolute unity, without any doubt, as it possesses absolute intelligence; but again, absolute unity, without any real subject of inherence, is destitute of all reality. Real and determinate are synonymous terms. That which constitutes a being, is its special nature, its essence. A being is itself only on condition of being no other: it cannot, then, be deprived of characteristic traits. All that exists, exists so or so. The difference is an element as essential to being as unity itself. If, then, reality is the same thing as determination, it follows that God is the most determinate of beings. Aristotle is much more a Platonist than Plotinus, when he says that God is

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\* See foregoing note, No. 1.

the thought of thought; that he is not a simple power, but a power passed into action, and effectively acting; understanding by this, that God, in order to be perfect, must have nothing in him, which may not be accomplished. It is to finite nature that it belongs, to a certain point, to be indeterminate, since being finite, it has always in itself powers which are not realized; this indetermination diminishes in proportion as it removes itself from it. Thus true divine unity is not abstract unity; it is the precise unity of perfect being in which all is completed. At the summit of existence, still more than in its most humble degree, all is determinate, all is developed, all is distinct, as all is one. The richness of determination is the sign itself of plentitude of being. Reflection distinguishes the determinations among themselves, but it is not necessary to see limits in these determinations. Behold what has deceived the Alexandrian mysticism: it has imagined that diversity of attributes is incompatible with simplicity of essence; and, for fear of corrupting simple and pure essence, it makes an abstraction of it. By a foolish scrupulousness, it has feared that God might not be perfect enough, if it left to him all his perfections; it considers them as imperfections, being as a degradation, creation as a fall."

Ibid., p. 347: "God is not a logical being, whose nature we may explain by deduction, by means of algebraic equations. When, in setting out from a first attribute, we deduce the attributes of God successively in the manner of geometricians and scholastics, what do we possess, I pray you, except abstractions? We must leave vain dialectics, in order to arrive at a real and living God.

"The first notion that we have of God, to wit, the notion of an infinite being, is not given to us *a priori*, independent of all experience. It is the consciousness of ourselves as beings, and at the same time limited beings, which raises us immediately to the conception of a being who is the principle of our being, and who is himself without limits. This solid and simple argument, which is at foundation that of Descartes, opens to us a way which it is

necessary to follow, and in which Descartes stopped too soon. If the being which we possess forces us to recur to a cause which possesses this same being to an infinite degree, whatever we shall possess of being, that is of substantial attributes, will equally claim an infinite cause. Hence God will no longer be simply the infinite, abstract, and indeterminate being which reason and the heart cannot lay hold of; he will be a real and determinate being like ourselves, a moral personality like ours, and psychology will conduct us without hypothesis to a theodicea at once sublime and within our reach."

*Ibid.*, p. 389: "We have not made use of geometry and algebra in the theodicea, according to the example of many philosophers, and of the most illustrious, too. We have not deduced the attributes of God, one from the other, as we convert the different terms of an equation, or as from one property of a triangle we deduce its other properties, that which ends in a God entirely abstract, good perhaps for the schools, but insufficient for the human race. We have given to the theodicea a more sure foundation—psychology. Our God is doubtless the author of the world; but he is especially the father of humanity; his intelligence is ours, to which we add necessity of essence and infinite power. So that our justice and our charity, related to their immortal example, give us an idea of divine justice and charity. Behold a real God with whom we can sustain a real relation also, whom we can comprehend and feel, and who, in his turn, can comprehend and feel our efforts, our sufferings, our virtues, our miseries, because, after all, that God is in ourselves, in our cause and in our eternal substance; made in his image, guided even to him by a ray of his being, there is between him and us a living and sacred tie.

"Our theodicea is free at once of hypothesis and abstraction. In preserving ourselves from one, we have preserved ourselves from the other. Consenting to recognize God only in his signs visible to the eyes, intelligible to the mind, sensible to the soul, it is upon infallible evidences that we have elevated ourselves to God. By a necessary consequence, setting out from effects and real attri-

butes, we have arrived at a cause and a real substance ; at a cause having in power all its essential effects, at a substance rich in attributes. I wonder at the folly of those who, in order to understand God better, consider him, as they say, in his pure and absolute essence, disengaged from all liminary determination. I believe that I have forever removed the root of such an extravagance. It is not true that diversity of determinations, and consequently of qualities and attributes, destroys the absolute unity of a being ; the proof is, that my unity is not the least in the world altered by the diversity of my faculties, and by their development. It is not true that unity excludes multiplicity and multiplicity unity ; for unity and multiplicity are united in me. Why, then, should they not be so in God ? Moreover, far from altering unity in me, multiplicity develops it, and makes apparent its fecundity. So the richness of the determinations and of the attributes of God is precisely the sign of the plenitude of his being. To neglect his attributes is, then, to impoverish them ; we do not say that it is to destroy them ; for a being without attributes is not ; and abstraction of being, human or divine, finite or infinite, relative or absolute, is nothingness."

*Fragments of Cartesian Philosophy.* Vanini, p. 24 : "As the infinite being, in so far as infinite, is not a moving power—a cause, he is none the more, in so far as infinite, an intelligence ; he is none the more a will ; he is none the more a principle of justice ; nor, and still less, a principle of love. We have not the right to impute to him all these attributes, by virtue of this single argument : Every contingent being supposes a being who is not so, every finite being supposes an infinite being. The God whom this argument gives, exists, strictly ; but he is almost as if he were not, for us, at least, who scarcely perceive him, in the inaccessible depths of an eternity and of an absolute existence, void of thought, of activity, of liberty, of love, similar to the nothingness itself of existence, and a thousand times inferior in its infinity and its eternity to an hour of our finite and perishable existence, if, during this fugitive hour, we know what we are, if

we think, if we love any other thing than ourselves, if we feel capable of freely sacrificing to an idea the few moments that are granted to us here. 'Man is only a reed, but he is a thinking reed;' I may add, a willing and loving reed; it is from thence that it is necessary for us to rise, not from space and from duration, which we cannot fill."

II. I could accumulate quite as many passages against the God of pantheism: I shall be satisfied with citing two, borrowed from different epochs.

First Series, Vol. 2, Course of 1818, page 393: "The world is indefinite; it is not infinite; the proof is, that whatever may be its quantity, thought can always add to it. Of however so many myriads the totality of the world may be composed, we may still add to it new myriads. But God is infinite, absolutely infinite in his essence, and we deny that an indefinite series equals the infinite; for, after all, the indefinite is only the finite multiplied by itself. The world is a whole which has its harmony, for God could have only produced a work complete and harmonious. The harmony of the world responds to the unity of God, as its indefinite quantity is the deficient sign of the infinity of God. To say that the world is God, is to admit only the world, and it is to deny God. Give to this whatever name you please, it is at bottom atheism."

*Thoughts of Pascal*, Introduction, page xliii.: "Let us speak without circumlocution: What is pantheism? It is not an atheism disguised, as they say: no; it is an avowed atheism. To say, in presence of this universe, so vast, so beautiful, so magnificent: God is there entire, behold God, there is no other; is to say as clearly as possible that there is no God, for it is to say that the universe has not a cause essentially different from its effects. . . . However immense it may be, this world is finite in itself, compared to God who is infinite; he manifests, but he also veils his grandeur, intelligence, wisdom. The universe is the image of God, it is not God; something of the cause passes into the effect, it does not exhaust itself there, and it remains en-

tire. The universe itself is so far from exhausting God, that many of the attributes of God are there covered with an obscurity almost impenetrable, and are discovered only in the soul of man. The universe is a necessity; but the soul is free, it is one, simple, essentially identical with itself, under the harmonious diversity of its faculties: it is capable of conceiving virtue, and of accomplishing it; it is capable of love and of sacrifice. Now, we are averse to believing that the being who is the first and last cause of this soul is an abstract being, possessing less than he has given, and having himself neither personality, nor liberty, nor intelligence, nor justice, nor love. Either God is inferior to man, or he possesses at least all that is permanent and substantial in man, with infinity besides."

III. I will close this note by some passages destined to combat at once pantheism and abstract theodiceas, the universe-God, and God without relation to the universe. In the passages which precede, and especially in the first, the particular object that was proposed has been to give an exaggerated appearance to the discourse; here, equilibrium is more strictly guarded, and our thought is expressed in all its truth.

*Philosophical Fragments*, Ancient Philosophy, Xenophanes, page 58: "The idea of the world and that of God are the two extreme terms of all speculation; it remains to find their relation. The solution that first presents itself to the human mind, preoccupied as it necessarily is with the idea of unity, is to absorb one of these two terms in the other, to identify the world with God, or God with the world, and thereby cut the knot instead of untying it. These two exclusive solutions are both very natural. It is natural when one has the sentiment of life, and of that existence so varied and so great of which we form a part, when one considers the extent of this visible world, and, at the same time, the harmony that reigns in it, and the beauty, visible throughout all its parts, to stop where the senses and the imagination stop, to suppose that the beings which compose this world are the only ones that exist; that this great whole, so harmonious



and one, is the true subject and the last application of the idea of unity ; that, in a word, this whole is God. Express this result in the Greek language and you have pantheism. Pantheism is the conception of the whole as God alone. On the one hand, when we discover that the apparent unity of the whole is only a harmony, and not an absolute unity, a harmony which admits an infinite variety, which much resembles a war and a constituted revolution, it is not then less natural to detach from this world the idea of unity, which is indestructible in us ; and, thus detached from the imperfect model of this visible world, to refer it to an invisible being placed above and without this world, the sacred type of absolute unity, beyond which there is nothing more to conceive and to seek. But having once reached absolute unity, it is no longer easy to go out of it, and comprehend how, absolute unity being given as a principle, it is possible to arrive at plurality as a consequence ; for absolute unity excludes all plurality. It then only remains, relative to this consequence, to deny it, or at least to regard the plurality of this visible world as a deceitful shadow of the absolute unity which alone exists, a fall scarcely comprehensible ; a negation and an evil, from which it is necessary to separate ourselves in order to stretch forward, without ceasing, to a single true being, to absolute unity, to God. Behold the system opposed to pantheism. Call it what you please, it is nothing else than the idea of unity applied exclusively to God, as pantheism is the same idea applied exclusively to the world. Now, once more, these two exclusive solutions of the fundamental problem are natural, the one as well as the other ; that is so true that they return, without ceasing, to all the great epochs of the history of philosophy, with the modifications which the progress of time gives to them, but at bottom always the same ; and we may truly say, that the history of their perpetual struggle, and the alternate dominion of one and the other, has been, up to this time, the history itself of the theodicea. It is because these two solutions cling to the basis of thought, that it reproduces them without cessation, in its equal impotence to sep-

arate itself from the one or the other, and to content itself with them. In fine, the one or the other taken isolatedly, is not sufficient for the human mind; and these two opposite points of view, so natural, and consequently so durable and so vivacious, exclusive as they both are, for the same reason, are equally defective and insufficient.

“A cry is raised against pantheism; the whole mind of the world is not able to vindicate this doctrine, and reconcile with it the human race. One attempts it in vain: if he is consistent, he ends with it only at a species of soul of the world as the principle of things, at fatality as the only law, at the confusion of good and evil, that is, at their destruction, in the bosom of a vague and abstract unity, without a fixed subject; for absolute unity is certainly in no one of the parts of this world taken separately; how, then, could it be in them taken together? As no effort can draw the absolute and the necessary from the relative and the contingent, so from plurality, added as many times as you please to itself, no generalization will draw unity, but simply totality. At bottom pantheism turns upon the confusion of these two ideas, so profoundly distinct. On the other hand, unity without plurality is not more real than plurality without unity is true. Absolute unity which does not go out from itself, or only casts a shadow, in vain overwhelms with its grandeur, and ravishes with its mysterious charm; it does not enlighten the spirit, and it is proudly contradicted by those of our faculties which are in relation with this world, and attest for us its reality, and by all the active and moral faculties, which would be a mockery, and would accuse their author, if the theatre where the obligation of exercise is imposed on them were only an illusion and a snare. A God without a world is just as false as a world without a God; a cause without effects, which manifests it, or an indefinite series of effects without a first cause, a substance which should never develop itself, or a rich development of phenomena without a substance which sustains them; reality borrowed solely from the visible or the invisible: on either hand there is equal

error and equal danger, equal oblivion of human nature, equal forgetfulness of one of the essential sides of thought and of things. Between these two chasms for a long time the good sense of mankind has directed its course ; for a long time, far from schools and systems, the human race has believed with equal certainty in God and in the world. They believe in a world as a real effect, firm and enduring, which they refer to a cause, not to a cause powerless and contradictory in itself, which, forsaking its effect, for that very reason would destroy it, but to a cause worthy of the name, which, producing and reproducing without cessation, deposits, without ever exhausting them, its force and its beauty in its work ; they believe, as it were, in a combination of phenomena which would cease to be at the moment in which the eternal substance should cease to sustain them ; they believe, as it were, in the visible manifestation of a concealed principle which speaks to them under this cover, and which they adore in nature and in consciousness. Behold in what the mass of the human race believe. The honor of true philosophy would be to collect this universal belief, and to give of it a legitimate explanation. At fault for not supporting itself on the human race, and not taking common sense as its guide, philosophy, erring on the right and on the left, has fallen by turns into either extreme of systems equally true in one respect, equally false in another, and all of them vicious for the same reason, because they are equally exclusive and incomplete. That is the continual danger of philosophy."

*Philosophic Fragments*, Preface of the second edition : "Pantheism is properly the deification of every thing, the great whole regarded as God, the universe-God of the most part of my adversaries, of Saint-Simon, for example. It is at bottom a veritable atheism, but with which one can mix, as Saint-Simon has done, at least his school, a certain religious coloring, by applying to the world very legitimately the ideas of the good and of the beautiful, of the infinite, and of unity, which belong solely to the supreme cause, and are not found in the world only

so far as it is, like every effect, the manifestation of all the powers contained in the cause. The system opposed to pantheism is that of absolute unity, so superior and anterior to the world, that it is a stranger to it, and that at first it becomes impossible to comprehend how this unity has been able to go out from itself, and how from such a principle one can draw this vast universe with the variety of its forces and its phenomena. This last system is the abuse of metaphysical abstraction, as the first is the abuse of an exalted contemplation of nature, retained, sometimes without their knowledge, in the senses and the imagination. The two systems are more natural than we might suppose when we had not ourselves passed through the different states of the soul, and of intelligence, which could produce both. In general, every student of nature ought to guard himself against the first, and every metaphysician against the second. The perfect, but also the most difficult way, is not to lose the sentiment of nature in meditation and in the schools, and, in presence of nature, to ascend in spirit and in truth, as far as to the invisible principle which manifests to us, and veils from us at the same time the ravishing harmony of the world. Can it be conceived that it is the school of sensualism which raises against any one the accusation of pantheism, and which raises it against me? To accuse me of pantheism, is to accuse me of confounding the first, absolute, infinite cause, with the universe, that is, with the two relative and finite causes of the *me* and the *not-me*, the boundaries and the evident insufficiency of which are the foundation upon which I elevate myself to God. In truth, I did not think that I should ever have to defend myself against such a reproach. But if I have not confounded God and the world, if my God is not the universe-God of pantheism, he is not more, I grant, the abstraction of absolute unity, the dead God of scholasticism. . . ."

*The Thoughts of Pascal*, Preface, p. 63: "The relations which unite the creation and the Creator compose a problem obscure and delicate, the two extreme solutions of which are equally false

and perilous : on the one hand, a God so passed into the world that he has the appearance of being absorbed in it ; on the other, a God so separated from the world, that the world has the appearance of going on without him : on both sides there is equal excess, equal danger, equal error. God is in the world always and everywhere ; hence, with being and duration, the order and the beauties of this world which come from God, mixed with the imperfections inherent in the creature. . . . ”

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## LECTURE VI.

## THE GREAT EPOCHS OF HISTORY.

Return to the fundamental fact of consciousness.—Distinction between the form given to this fact by reflection, and its spontaneous form.—Character of spontaneity.—It is in the spontaneity of reason that absolute independence and the impersonality of rational truths are declared.—Refutation of Kant.—Identity of the human reason in the spontaneous perception of truth.—Reflection, element of difference.—Necessity and utility of reflection.—History, condition of all development—time, condition of time—succession, condition of succession—particularity, division, contradiction; necessity and utility of all this.—The end of history.—Of true perfectibility.—That there are three great historical epochs, and that there can be no more.

We advanced far in the last lecture. Starting from human reason, we ascended as far as to God, in order to descend to nature, and thence to mount up again to humanity. This is the circle of things; it is that of philosophy.

It was necessary to start from human reason, it was the only legitimate point of departure, for it was the only possible point of departure. It is with the human reason that we do all things, that we comprehend, reject or admit all things; therefore, from that it was necessary to start. In the human reason we have found three ideas, which it does not constitute, but which rule over it and govern it in all its applications. From these ideas the passage to God was not difficult. To go from reason to God there is no need of a long journey and of foreign mediators; the only mediator is truth—the truth, which, not proceeding from man, is of itself related to a higher source. But it was impossible to stop there. God, being a cause and a force, at the same time that he is a substance, could not but manifest himself. The manifestation of God is implied in the idea itself of God. In a perfectly natural manner the manifestation, the effect, the world,

has made the characters of the cause and of the divine substance appear. And then the interior movement of the forces of the world has produced from degree to degree, from kingdom to kingdom, that wonderful being of which the fundamental attribute is consciousness; and in this we have met with precisely the same elements, which, under different conditions, we have already found in nature and in God. The fact of consciousness is a complex phenomenon, composed of three terms: the *me* and the *not-me*, bounded, limited, finite; again, the idea of the infinite; and still again, the idea of the relation of the *me* and the *not-me*, that is, of the finite to the infinite; these are the three terms of consciousness. This fact, transferred from the individual to the race and to history, is the key of all the developments of humanity. It is therefore important to examine attentively, and to collect its different characters.

When to-day any one of you turns his attention to himself, and enters into consciousness, he finds there the three elements which we have designated. First, you find yourself a being evidently bounded, limited, finite. This clear and determinate notion of the finite does not satisfy you, and it suggests to you that of the infinite. In developed intelligence, in languages, which are what intelligence has made them, the finite supposes the infinite, as the infinite the finite: the opposite suggests the opposite; and it is with the actual relation of the finite and the infinite, as with the two terms by which this relation is expressed: it is just as evident and just as necessary. It is even impossible for you to pronounce one of these words without having the other come immediately to your lips; and it comes to your lips only because the idea which it represents comes irresistibly to your thought. Behold how things happen to-day; but will they always thus happen? Remark what is the eminent character of the intellectual fact to which I have just directed your attention: when you have one of its three terms, you have the other two, you conceive them, you affirm them; and if you try to deny them, you do not succeed; you are convinced of the impossibility



of not doing that which you do, the impossibility of not conceiving that which you conceive ; there is trial of doubt, of negation, and, at the same time, persuasion that this trial is a failure. But I ask you if intelligence begins with negation. I will not give myself the trouble to demonstrate that intelligence does not begin with negation, knowing that a negation supposes an affirmation of denying, as reflection supposes something anterior to what it applies itself to. You commence neither with reflection nor with negation ; you commence with an operation which we are trying to determine, and which is the necessary foundation of negation and of reflection. But can reflection, which supposes an anterior operation, add any terms to those which are contained in that operation which logic demonstrates to us as the starting point of all reflection ? It cannot be that reflection adds to the operation to which it applies itself. To reflect, is to return to that which was ; it is, by the aid of memory, to return to the past, and to render it present to the eyes of consciousness. Reflection adds itself to that which was, makes clear that which is, but creates nothing. It follows, that if reflection creates nothing, and if it supposes an anterior operation, in this anterior operation it will be very necessary that there should be as many terms as are at present discovered by reflection in consciousness. A vanquished negation, attempted and recognized as powerless, can substantiate nothing but what affirmation first substantiated. This is the result of the most common logic ; but if you have the strength to return more profoundly to yourself, to traverse reflection, and ascend to the starting point of all reflection, you will convert into an evident fact of consciousness the result which logic forces upon you.

I wish to think, and I think. But does it not sometimes happen that I think without having wished to think ? Transfer yourselves to the first act of intelligence, for intelligence must have had its first act, before which you were ignorant that you were an intelligence, intelligence taking cognizance of itself only by its acts, by an act at least ; before this act it was not in your

power to suppose it, and you were absolutely ignorant of it. Well! when intelligence for the first time is manifested, it is clear that it is not voluntarily manifested. It is manifested, nevertheless, and you have had the more or less vivid consciousness of it. Endeavor to take yourself unawares in the act of thinking, without having wished to think, and you will thus find yourself at the starting point of intelligence, and you will be able to observe with more or less precision that which took place and must have taken place in the first act of your intelligence, at a time which no longer exists, and which cannot return. To think is to affirm; the first affirmation is one neither of volition nor of reflection; no more can it be an affirmation mixed with negation; it is hence an affirmation without negation, a pure affirmation, an instinctive perception of truth. Now, what is there in this primitive affirmation? All that will be at a later period in reflection: but if all is there, all is there under another form. We do not commence by seeking ourselves, for this would be to suppose that we already know that we are; but there comes a day, an hour, a moment, a solemn moment in existence, when without searching for ourselves we find ourselves; we then affirm our existence with a conviction that is mingled with no doubt, because it is free from all reflection; we perceive ourselves with certainty, but also without discerning with the clearness of reflection our own character, which is that of being limited and bounded; no more do we discern very precisely the character of this world; we find ourselves and we find the world, whose boundaries and whose imperfections we feel, and we vaguely perceive something different and better to which we refer both ourselves and the world. Intelligence naturally perceives all this, but it is not able to perceive it at first in a reflective, distinct manner; it perceives it with perfect certainty, but with some confusion.

Such is the primitive act of affirmation, anterior to all reflection, and free from all negation; it is this act which the human race has called inspiration. Inspiration, in all languages, is distinct from reflection; it is the perception of truth, I mean of es-

sential and fundamental truths, without the intervention of will, and without mixture of personality. Inspiration does not belong to us. It comes at its own hour, and we are able neither to pursue it nor retain it. It is the result of activity, without doubt, an activity lofty and pure; but not reflective, voluntary, and personal activity. Inspiration is characterized by enthusiasm; it is accompanied by that powerful emotion which tears the soul away from its ordinary and subaltern state, and disengages in it the sublime and divine part of its nature.

*Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo.\**

Man not being able to refer to himself this marvellous act, refers it to God, together with the truths which inspiration reveals to him, which he has not produced, and which govern him. Is he deceived? No, certainly; for what is God? I have told you,† he is the eternal reason, first substance and first cause of the truths which man perceives. When, therefore, man does homage to God for the truths which he is able to refer neither to the impressions which this world gives to his senses, nor to his own personality, he relates them to their true source; and the absolute affirmation of truth without reflection—inspiration, enthusiasm, is a veritable revelation. Thus, in the cradle of civilization, he who possessed in a higher degree than his fellows the gift of inspiration, passed for the confidant and the interpreter of God. He is so for others because he is so for himself, and he is so, in fact, in a philosophic sense. Behold the sacred origin of prophecies, of pontificates, and of modes of worship.

Remark, also, this particular effect of inspiration. When man, hurried by the vivid and rapid perception of truth, attempts to produce outwardly that which passes within him, and to express it by words, he is able to express it only by words as marvellous

\* Upon wonder and enthusiasm, 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 12, p. 188.

† See Lecture V. of this vol., and 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 7 and 8, *God, principle of necessary truths*; and Lecture 23, *God, principle of the idea of the good*.

as the phenomenon which they strive to render intelligible. The necessary form, the natural language of inspiration, is poetry, and the primitive speech is a hymn. We do not begin with prose, but with poetry, because we do not begin with reflection, but with intuition and absolute affirmation.

Hence it follows again that we do not begin with science, but with faith, I mean faith in reason; for, at foundation, there is no other. In the strictest sense, faith implies belief without bounds, with this condition, that its object be something which is not us; which, consequently, may be to us a sacred authority which we can invoke against others and ourselves, which becomes the measure and the rule of our conduct and of our thought. Now this character of faith, which later, in the battle between religion and philosophy, will be opposed to reason, this character is precisely that of reason; for, if it is certain that all authority which ought to reign over us ought to be for us impersonal, it is certain, also, that nothing is less personal for us than reason, that it does not belong to us as our own, and that it is reason, and reason alone, which reveals to us from on high the truths necessary for the human race; so that reason and faith are confounded in the primitive perception of truth. For the sake of abridging, and that we may have the subject in few words, I call spontaneity of reason\* this development of reason anterior to reflection, this power which reason has to seize at first upon truth, to comprehend it and to admit it, without demanding and rendering to itself an account of it.

This spontaneous and instinctive thought begins to act by its own power, and gives to us at first ourselves, the world, and God, ourselves and the world with boundaries confusedly perceived, and God without bounds; the whole in a synthesis in which the clear and the obscure are mingled together. Little by little reflection and analysis are applied to this complex phenomenon;

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\* Upon the spontaneity of reflection, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, pp. 69, 99, etc. and Vol. 5, p. 204, and following.

then every thing is made clear, is defined and determined; the *me* is separated from the *not-me*; the *me* and the *not-me*, in their opposition and in their agreement, give us a clear idea of the finite; and as the finite does not itself suffice itself, it conceives and expresses the infinite, and behold the categories of the *me* and the *not-me*, of the finite and of the infinite, etc. But what is the source of these categories? spontaneous perception; and as there is nothing more in reflection than in spontaneity, in analysis than in primitive synthesis, the categories under their developed and scientific form contain nothing more than inspiration. And how have you obtained the categories? Once more, you have obtained them by analysis, that is, by reflection. Now, reflection has for a necessary element will, and will is personality, is yourselves. The categories obtained by reflection have, therefore, the appearance, by their relation to reflection, to the will, and to personality, of being personal; they have so much the appearance of being personal, that some have made them the laws of our nature, without so much as explaining what they mean by our nature; and the greatest modern analyst, after having separated the categories from any connection with sensation and every empiric element, after having enumerated and classified them, and having attributed to them an irresistible force, finding them at the bottom of consciousness, where all personality has its being, concludes that they are only the laws of our personal being; and as it is ourselves who form the subject of our consciousness, Kant, in his vocabulary, calls them subjective laws; when, therefore, we transfer ourselves to exterior nature, according to him, we do nothing but transfer the subject to the object, and, to speak after the German manner, nothing but to make objective the subjective laws of thought. Kant, after having arrested the categories from sensualism, left to them the character of subjectivity which they have in reflection. But, if they are purely subjective, you have no right to transfer them out of yourself, out of the subject for which they were made; thus the external world, which their application gives you, can indeed be for you an in-

vincible belief, but not any thing which exists in itself; thus God may indeed be for you a necessary hypothesis, but not a real object of knowledge. After having commenced by a little idealism, Kant ends in skepticism. The problem on which this great man made shipwreck, is the problem which modern philosophy still finds before it. I have previously given a solution of it which time has not disturbed.\* That solution is the distinction between spontaneous reason and reflective reason. If Kant, under his profound analysis, had seen the source of all analysis; if, under reflection, he had seen the primitive and certain fact of pure affirmation, he would have seen that there is nothing less personal than reason, especially in the phenomenon of pure affirmation; that, consequently, there is nothing less subjective, and that the truths which are thus given us are absolute, subjective truths, I admit, by their relation to the *me* which perceives them, but objective in themselves because they are independent of it. Truth is absolute and different from our reason, as reason is distinct from ourselves. Reason is not subjective; the subject is the *me*, is the person, is liberty, is will. The reason has no such character of personality and of liberty. Who has ever said, *my* truth, *your* truth? Far from being able to constitute the truths which reason reveals to us, it is our honor, our glory to attain them, and to participate in them.

To recapitulate, the character of spontaneity in reason is the demonstration of the independence of the truths perceived by reason. When we speak of the world, we do not speak of it upon the faith of the subject which we are, for we should speak of it upon an incompetent authority, but we speak of it upon the faith of reason, to which nature is not less subjected than humanity. When we speak of God, we have a right to speak of him, because we speak of him by his own command, by the command of that reason which he represents. It is not strange

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 1, p. 220; Vol. 2, pp. 22, 27-32, Lecture 5, on the *Values of Rational Principles*, p. 65, Lecture 24, p. 378, and especially Vol. 5, Lecture 8, pp. 297-311.

that reason reveals to us entities, for it is itself, in its principle, the veritable substance and absolute essence.

The fact which I have just pointed out to you is universal. Reflection, doubt, skepticism, belong to certain ones ; pure perception, and spontaneous faith belong to all ; spontaneity is the genius of humanity, as philosophy is the genius of some men. Without doubt there are natures more fortunately endowed in which inspiration manifests itself with more brilliancy ; but in fact, with more or less energy, thought develops itself spontaneously in all thinking beings, and it is the identity of spontaneity in the human race, with the absolute faith which it engenders, which constitutes the identity of the human species. Who, in the spontaneous exercise of his intelligence, does not believe in himself, and does not believe in the world ? This is evident in regard to our existence, and in regard to that of the world. It is the same in regard to the existence of God. Leibnitz said : There is being in every proposition. But a proposition is only an expressed thought, and if in every proposition there is being, it is because there is being in every thought. Now, the idea of being, even the most imperfect, implies an idea more or less clear, but real, of perfect being, that is, of God. In fine, to think, is to know and believe what we think ; it is to put confidence in our thought, it is to put confidence in the principle of thought, it is, therefore, to believe in the existence of this principle ; and this principle being neither the *me* nor the world, but God himself, it follows, whether we know it or not, that all thought implies a spontaneous faith in God, and that there is no such thing as natural atheism.\* I do not only say that there is no language in which this great name is not found ; but if dictionaries destitute of this name were placed before my eyes, I should not be troubled ; for I should ask only one thing : Does any one of the men who speak this language think, and has he faith in his thought ? Does he believe that he exists, for example ? If he

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\* First Series, Vol. 2d, p. 82-83, and p. 98.

believes that, it is sufficient for me ; for if he believes that he exists, he believes, therefore, that this thought of believing that he exists, is worthy of faith ; he has, therefore, faith in the principle of thought, and this principle is God. Every serious conviction covers a concealed faith in thought, in reason, in God. Every word is an act of faith ; this is why, in the infancy of societies, primitive speech is a hymn. Search in the history of languages, of societies, and in every remote epoch, and you will find in them nothing which can be anterior to the lyric element, to hymns, to litanies : so true it is that every primitive conception is a spontaneous perception, an imprint of faith, an inspiration accompanied by enthusiasm, that is, a religious movement of the soul. In that, I repeat, is the identity of the human species. Everywhere, under its instinctive form, reason is equal to itself in all the generations of humanity, and in all the individuals of which these different generations are composed. Whoever has not been cut off from the inheritance of thought, has not been cut off any more from the inheritance of those ideas which all thought contains, and which science at a later period presents with the dress, and under the affrighting title of principles, of laws, of categories. Under their simple and primitive form, these ideas are everywhere the same. It is in a certain manner the age of innocence, the golden age of thought. Therefore, respect humanity in all its members, for in all its members is the divine ray of intelligence, and there is an essential confraternity in the unity of the fundamental ideas which the most immediate development of reason produces.

Nevertheless, under this unity there are some differences ; there are in the human race, from century to century, from nation to nation, from individual to individual, manifest differences. It is not possible to deny these, it is necessary to comprehend them, and to search out whence they come. They proceed from a single cause. Reason develops itself in two ways : spontaneity, or reflection ; perception and pure affirmation of the truth with entire confidence, not only without any mixture of



doubt, but without the supposition of the possibility of a negation, or the necessary conception of truth after the trial of a negation convinced of absurdity and rejected; primitive and obscure synthesis, or clear and more or less faithful analysis; there is no other form of thought. We have seen that spontaneity scarcely admits of any essential differences. It, therefore, remains that the striking differences which are seen in the human race must spring from reflection.

Upon what condition do you reflect? Upon the condition of memory. Upon what condition does memory exist? Upon the condition of time. Reflection considers the elements of thought only successively, and not all at once. If it considers them successively, it considers them, for a moment at least, in an isolated manner; and as each of these elements is important in itself, the effect which it produces on reflection may be such that it may take this particular element of the complex phenomenon of thought for entire thought and the whole phenomenon. In this is the peril of reflection; in this exists the possibility of error, and in this possibility of error that of difference. There is scarcely any difference in the perception of truth, or indeed the differences are not very important; it is upon error essentially mobile and diverse that the difference falls, and the error proceeds from an incomplete and partial view of things. Error, therefore, comes from reflection. But without reflection there would never have been that high degree of clearness which results from the successive examination of the different points of view of a fact, of a problem, of every thing. Without reflection, man would play only a feeble part in the perception of truth; he indeed takes possession of it, he appropriates it to himself only by reflection. It is, therefore, a high and excellent development of the human reason; it is good that this development take place, even at the price of all the chances of error.

From these things I draw the conclusion, that error is not, and never can be, a complete extravagance, a total delusion, for a total

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sion (except in case of real derangement) is impossible. In thought, consciousness demands that there should always be in the consciousness some one of the necessary elements of consciousness. Do not lose sight of this point of view. Because there is consciousness, even with error, there must necessarily be a consciousness of at least some one of the elements of consciousness; there must necessarily be a perception of something real, that is, of something true. Consequently the error is not a total and absolute error; for in total and absolute error consciousness perishes. Therefore any but a particular error, error more or less considerable, is impossible. If none but a particular error is possible, it follows that by the side of error there is always some perception of the truth. Thus, reflection, applying itself to consciousness, and attempting doubt and negation, may succeed in not admitting one of the terms of consciousness, the infinite, for instance, and it may stop at finite. Behold the infinite denied and rejected. Be it so; consciousness is not destroyed, and all the other elements remain: by the side of this error there will be the belief in the exterior world, and the belief in self. The error falls upon one element, the perception of truth falls upon another; but there is

In days of crisis and agitation, doubt and skepticism enter with reflection into many excellent spirits who lament it themselves, and are affrighted with their own incredulity. Well! I will undertake their defence against themselves; I wish to render them the service of showing them that they have more faith than they suppose. Take things on the fair side, I beseech you. When the truth is wanting to you on one point, and is not wanting on another, attach yourselves to that portion of the truth which you possess, and enlarge it successively. So, when you see one of your fellow-beings who, not being sufficiently able to deny his own existence, for this is a trial of strength of which we are very little apprized, sets himself to doubt the existence of the world, that which is, moreover, not very common, and, above all, the existence of God, that which appears more easy without being so; say, continually repeat that this being is not degraded, that he still believes in something, since he still affirms something; that consequently he has some faith, that this faith is only centred upon a single point; and instead of dwelling continually upon that which is wanting to him, dwell rather upon that which he possesses; and you will see that in the most limited, most skeptical reflection, there always exists a considerable element of faith, and of strong and extended convictions. So much for reflection. But beneath reflection there is still spontaneity; when the scholar has denied the existence of God, listen to the man, interrogate him, take him unawares, and you will see that all his words envelop the idea of God, and that faith in God, is, without his recognition, at the bottom of his heart. The indestructible spontaneity of thought is always there, which produces and sustains all essential truths; error is never entire, it is only partial; it comes from the necessary succession of the different elements of truth and of thought, under the penetrating but bounded eye of the human spirit.

What I have just shown you upon the limited theatre of individual consciousness, transfer upon that of universal consciousness, upon the theatre of history. The unity of the race is there

also, with its differences, which are magnified in proportion to the scene, without change of nature.

The different elements of the consciousness of the human race are developed in history, only upon the condition of being successive, of appearing one after the other. At the moment in which one of these appears, the human race occupy themselves with the element which passes before their eyes, and in their weakness perceive only that. They are right in believing that this element exists, but they are wrong in believing that this alone exists. Hence error. Here, again, error is only an incomplete view.

A particular element which passes upon the theatre of history cannot be sufficient for the extent of the spectacle; and after having appeared, it is condemned to disappear: because it had begun to be, it was necessary for it to end. That alone which does not commence to be never ceases to be, is infinite, universal, absolute. Pure and absolute truth is not of this world, it does not commence one day to end the next. But that which commences one day and that which ends another day, are mixed and incomplete truths, that is, errors. One shines for a day, and disappears more or less quickly; there comes another which has the same destiny, which makes for us an illusion in the same manner, and vanishes in its turn. Thus come successively new truth, and, at the same time, new error; until from incomplete truths to incomplete truths the circle of truths is completed, the different elements of thought manifest themselves, and arrive at their complete development.

At first glance, what do you perceive in history? you perceive only particularities; at first, such a people, then such an other, such an epoch, such a system, always particularities. Nothing really exists but under the condition of particularity. Each particularity begins, and therefore ends. Hence you perceive in history only illusions, at the same time that, under another point of view, you perceive in it only truths. History is a succession of truths and a succession of errors; that is its forced condition, for the condition of history is succession, the condition of succession

is particularity, the condition of particularity is error, and the condition of error is opposition, contradiction, misery. That which was succession and division in individual reflection, is in history discord and war. War is the spectacle which history presents, a spectacle at first glance full of sadness. He who has not the secret of the movements of history, who knows not that every error contains a truth whose sole defect is that of being incomplete, in contemplating history believes the human race is in a perpetual error, and sees everywhere only errors in conflict with each other; and as there are no chances for that to terminate, and for the human race, after having reached the year 1828 in a perpetual flux and reflux of contrary illusions, to arrive at last at truth and peace, error and discord extend themselves in some sort from the past to the future, and keep the spectator in a profound melancholy. This result is very natural; it is almost inevitable at the beginning of reflection and of historic studies; but it is not necessary to give way to it; it is necessary to say to one's self, that all error is only an appearance and covers a truth; and that error, if I may thus express myself, is the form of truth in history. All these errors, that is, all these truths, succeed each other; they commence and they end, they contradict and destroy each other; epochs press upon epochs, and devour each other. Even that is a good, for upon this condition alone the fundamental elements of humanity are developed. Once more, do you know what is necessary in order that you may understand something? it is necessary that reflection should be applied to it; and reflection considers things only one by one. To be ignorant of one thing, feeble as we are, is the imperative condition of thoroughly understanding another. So an idea appears in this world only in its particularity, that it may there fully display itself, that all the concealed powers which it enfolds in its bosom may bring themselves to light little by little. Every idea whose development has not been fully accomplished, is yet unknown upon some side; you understand a principle only so far as you understand all its consequences; I say all, for if

there is a single one which is wanting to it, there is in this principle something essential of which you are ignorant; there is a corner of this truth which escapes you. In order to understand an idea well, it is necessary to separate it from all others, it is necessary to take it as an isolated whole, in order to consider it in its beginning, in its middle, in its end; only when you have gone to the bottom of it, do you know what it is; it is then unveiled to your eyes. Thus each idea unfolds itself in an isolated and successive manner in history; when all its points of view have been exhausted, it has played its part, and it gives place to another which runs the same career. Are you displeased with this mobility, with this perpetual change? know with what you are displeased: you are displeased with light, with knowledge, with science. Science is acquired with difficulty, with the sweat of the brow, at the price of humanity's perpetual labor. Spontaneity is innocence, the golden age of thought; but virtue is worth more than innocence, and virtue requires a continual struggle. History has no age of gold; it begins with a reign of iron, with the differences and the contradictions of time and of movement. Finally, do not forget that, if all these points of view, all these systems, excellent in themselves, but incomplete, destroy one another, there is something which subsists, which has preceded them, and which follows them—humanity. Humanity embraces all, profits by all, advances continually and athwart all. And when I say humanity, I mean all the powers which represent it in history—industry, art, religion, philosophy. For instance, in regard to philosophy, Platonism began and Platonism ended. This was a misfortune, one may say; but for whom? For Platonism, and not for humanity; for after Plato came Aristotle, and humanity without losing the one gained the other. Is Plato lost for humanity? did he not impress on his age a movement which left its trace? did he not leave in history a memorable element? Aristotle and peripateticism left there another element; and it is by elements added to elements that the treasury of human reason is enriched. History is a game in

which all the world successively loses, except humanity, which gains by the ruin of one as by the victory of another. Revolutions in vain succeed each other, for humanity governs all revolutions. What do the different epochs of humanity do? They measure its duration, they labor to fulfil it, they aspire to give of humanity a complete idea. What do different philosophies do? They aspire, also, to give of reason a complete representation: therefore each one of them is good in its place and in its time, and it is also well that all should succeed each other, and replace each other. So in general history every thing is succeeded and developed, every thing tends to the accomplishment of the end of history.

What is the end of history? What is the end of humanity and of life? Shall we content ourselves here with the ordinary common-place of indefinite perfectibility? But what is indefinite perfectibility? We may have some conception of the perfecting of a being, when once the type of the perfection of this being is assigned and defined. This type being defined, an end for this perfecting is marked out; this perfecting can have its plan, its laws, its regular progress, its starting point. But where the end is wanting, who can measure the route? What is perfecting for him who knows not in what perfection consists? It is absolutely necessary to determine in what it consists, or to talk of perfectibility without an end, without possible measure, is to speak unintelligibly. You see to what we are condemned, if by an indefinite perfectibility, we mean a perfectibility which is not definable. Or, indeed, will one say that humanity possesses a perfectibility without limits? That truly is difficult to believe; it is, moreover, that which follows from the declamations that are current upon this subject. I do not tax my invention; it has been affirmed that perfectibility was unlimited; and as the objection of physical life with its boundaries presented itself quite naturally, and threatened to beat down this hypothesis at a single blow, the chimera of perfectibility has been pushed to the point of assuring (I do not like to say it) that the physical life of man

will not only extend itself more or less, but that with the progress of the natural sciences, and of a wise philosophy, it will prolong itself almost indefinitely, and that we shall arrive almost at immortality in this world.\* It is a little too much to hope for. Yes, man is perfectible, but in a totally different sense. It is not necessary to imagine that with time man shall take another nature, that this nature will acquire new elements, which will have new laws. Man changes much, but he does not change fundamentally ; man is given, his nature is given, his intelligence is given, his physical constitution is given, with its necessary boundaries. The development of his intelligence is not infinite, it is finite ; it is measurable upon the very nature of this intelligence. We have seen that there can be in the human intelligence only three ideas. Reflection, applied to consciousness, might fix its attention upon it during myriads of ages, and it would be able to discover nothing but what exists there, that is, these three elements combined. And these combinations are not inexhaustible. When once you have all the terms, neither more nor less, of a combination given, you may calculate all its modes. If reflection is not able to add to consciousness a single element, history will not be able to add a single fundamental element to human nature. It develops human nature, and nothing more. You see its only power, and, consequently, its only end. The end of history and of humanity is nothing else than the movement of thought, which aspiring to understand itself completely, and being able to understand itself completely, only after having exhausted all the incomplete views of itself, tends, from one incomplete view to another, by a measurable progress, to a complete knowledge of itself, and of all its essential elements, successively disengaged, elucidated by their contrasts, by their momentary conciliations, by their wars continually renewed. Such is the general end of history and of humanity. This end assigned,

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\* See the eleventh Lecture of this volume.



this type of perfection determined, the movement of humanity and of history in order to attain it is determinable; progressive perfecting is certain, but it is definable, because it is finite; it has for a measure and for a limit human nature, the nature itself of thought. I repeat, that if the individual were to last ten centuries, and humanity millions of years, neither humanity nor the individual would give any new element. The individual will be born; if he is born, he will die, whatever Condorcet may say in regard to him. If the reason attaches itself to such a particular idea, one day it will detach itself. If such a nation accomplishes the idea which it was called to realize, it will pass away after having realized this idea. The system of empiricism and of sensation can be very vast; it is not sufficient, nevertheless, for thought: it will, therefore, pass away like many other systems. What do I say! In spite of the immortality which had been promised to it, it has already passed away, or become very obscure; and it is upon this condition that the circle of history, which is the circle of thought, is completed. Nevertheless, how many elements are there in thought? You have already seen: three, neither more nor less, the finite and the infinite, and the relation of the finite and the infinite. It appears to me, therefore, absolutely impossible that there should ever be in the development of thought and of humanity more than three great points of view, consequently more than three great epochs. I do not here put these three great epochs in order, I only enumerate them without choosing their place: there will necessarily be an epoch in which the human race will be occupied with such or such a particular idea, with the idea of the finite, for example, and will give to all its creations, and to all its conceptions, this exclusive character; or, indeed, struck with the idea of the infinite, it will impose upon every thing this other character; or, finally, after having conceived and exhausted in their particularity, that is, in their truth and error taken together, these two separate ideas, it will search

out, the two terms being known, their true relations. There can, therefore, be only three epochs; each one will be more or less comprehensive; but there can be no more. It is this which we must establish well, and also the order of these three epochs.

## LECTURE VII.

## THE PLAN OF HISTORY.

**Return to spontaneity and reflection in the individual and in the human race.—History: its epochs.—Three epochs, neither more nor less.—Order of these three epochs.—Order of succession.—Order of generation.—Of the plan of history, as the manifestation of the plan of Providence.—Historical optimism.**

THE instinct of reason reveals to humanity all essential truths at once, and in confused unity; it is reflection which, in breaking this unity, dissipates the clouds which cover its different elements and elucidates them in distinguishing them. It is the last end of reflection, in considering apart each one of these elements, to understand well the whole, and to arrive at their recomposition into a new unity, in which all the primitive elements are again found, but surrounded by the high light which is attached to reflection, and which results from a special, distinct, and profound examination of each one of these. Reason starts with a rich and fecund, but obscure synthesis; afterwards comes the analysis which elucidates all in dividing all, and which itself aspires to a superior synthesis, as comprehensive and more luminous than the first. Spontaneity gives truth; reflection produces science: one furnishes a large and solid foundation for the developments of humanity; the other impresses on these developments their most perfect form.

The end of reflection is great and excellent; it is therefore necessary to consent to that which alone can conduct us to it, to a decomposition of the primitive elements, and to a special examination of each one of them. Now, the natural condition of a special examination of one thing is neglect, forgetfulness, ignorance of all others. When reflection examines separately one of

the elements of primitive unity, it knows not, it cannot know, that another exists; for how could it know? It would know if it had arrived at the last end of reflection, that is, at the recomposition of all, that which is the end and not the starting point of reflection; it would know if it had a distinct and firm memory of primitive unity; but that cannot be, for there is no firm and distinct memory except as the result of reflection. When reflection enters into exercise, it supposes that another operation has already taken place before it, but it knows it badly, and it is entirely occupied with the operation which is peculiar to itself. Its function is to distinguish for the purpose of elucidating: it distinguishes, it separates, it takes each element one by one; while it attaches itself to one, another escapes it; it is, as it were, condemned to consider that which passes at present under its observation as the only and single element of thought. Hence, as I have said in the last lecture, not only the possibility, but the necessity of error. Error is one of the elements of thought, taken for the whole of thought. Error is an incomplete truth converted into an absolute truth. No other error is possible. In fact, it is not in the power of thought, if it exists, not to possess some one of the elements which constitute it; without which, every element of reality being wanting, all thought, even extravagant thought, would be impossible. We are therefore always in the true, and, at the same time, almost always in the false, when we reflect, because we are then nearly always in the incomplete, and because the incomplete yet belongs to truth, and already to error.

The necessity of error brings in its train the necessity of difference between men. Primitive unity, not supposing any distinction, admits neither of error nor of difference; but reflection, in dividing the elements of thought, by considering them in the exclusion of one from the other, brings error; and in considering sometimes one, and sometimes another, it produces variety of error, and consequently difference. Thus, man, who at the foundation, and in the spontaneous flight of his intelligence, is identi-

cal with himself, does not resemble himself in reflection at any two moments of his existence. Hence, the different epochs of individual existence. We may, in turning our thought back upon itself, be struck with such or such an element of our thought; and we elevate ourselves to this exclusive view, that is, to error, precisely upon the faith of the truth which is in it. Man does not open his understanding to any thing but truth, and it is necessary that error should take the form of truth in order to get itself admitted. The element which we consider apart, must be real in order to attract our attention; but real as it is, inasmuch as it is a particular element, it is not sufficient for the capacity of reflection, it does not occupy it entirely, it does not fill it constantly; after this exclusive consideration there can come another, and after that another still; thus proceeds intellectual life and its continual metamorphosis. It is not the exterior events which measure and divide life, but the interior events, those of thought. He who should never change from one point of intellectual and moral view, who should always be under the dominion of a single idea, would have only one and the same epoch during his whole life, how great soever the age he might attain, and howsoever changeable and diverse might be his adventures in this world. That which makes an epoch in life, is a change in ideas; behold that which truly divides existence and makes it different from itself. The necessary succession of the different points of view of reflection constitutes the real differences of man in comparison with himself. It is the same in regard to men compared with each other. As it is impossible that men should in any way agree together to consider at the same time the same side of thought and of things, it follows that in the same time they necessarily differ among themselves, that they do not comprehend one another, and cannot comprehend one another, and that they reciprocally treat one another as unreasonable and extravagant beings. He who is preoccupied with the idea of unity and of infinity, holds himself attached to it as with the whole strength of his being and his thought, pities the man to whom this finite

and bounded world can afford any pleasure, to whom life, in its variety, is agreeable and dear; on the other hand, he who is well pleased with this world, with the movement of affairs, and the interests of life, regards as a fool him who thinks and continually elevates himself towards the invisible principle of existence. Men are little else than halves, than quarters of men, who, not being able to comprehend themselves, accuse one another. You young men who frequent this lecture-room, will contract here, I hope, other habits; you will learn here that every error containing a truth merits a profound indulgence, that all these halves of men which one meets around him are fragments of humanity, and that in them it is necessary still to respect both the truth and the humanity of which they participate. And do you know upon what conditions you will arrive at this tolerance, or rather at this universal sympathy? Upon one alone: it is to escape yourselves from all exclusive preoccupation, it is to embrace all the elements of thought, and to reconstruct also in yourselves all humanity. Then, whosoever of your fellow-beings presents himself to you, whatsoever exclusive idea preoccupies him, that of unity and of infinity, or that of the finite and of variety, you will sympathize with him; for the idea which subjugates him will not be wanting to you; you will excuse humanity in him, for you will comprehend it, and you will comprehend it because you will possess it entire: that is the only remedy for the malady of fanaticism, which is nothing else, whatever may be its object, than the preoccupation of one element of thought, in the ignorance or the disdain of all others.

It is with the human race as with the individual. A primitive revelation throws light upon the cradle of human civilization. All antique traditions refer to an age in which man, at his departure from the hand of God, received from him immediately all lights and all truths, soon obscured and corrupted by time and by the incomplete science of men. It is the age of gold, it is the Eden which poetry and religion place at the beginning of history; the vivid and sacred image of reason in its native and

spontaneous energy before exertion, before the conquests and the wanderings of reflection.\*

What reflection is to the individual, history is to the human race. History makes all the essential elements of humanity appear in the midst of time; the condition of time is succession; and succession supposes that at the moment in which one element develops itself, the others do not yet develop themselves, or develop themselves no longer. Hence the necessity of different epochs in the human race. An epoch of the human race is nothing else than one of the elements of humanity developed apart, and occupying upon the stage of history a more or less considerable space of time, with a mission to play there the part which has been assigned to it, to display all the powers which are in it, and to retire only after having elevated to history all that was in its bosom. Thus the epochs of humanity necessarily differ, and diversity is there a contradiction, a strife, a war; for an epoch does not retire of itself and voluntarily; it is necessary that the new should constrain it to give place. But in another respect, all the epochs of history, even in their diversity and in their opposition, conspire to the same end. Incomplete, taken in itself, each epoch, joined to that which precedes it and to that which follows it, has its share in the complete and finished representation of human nature.

If an epoch is nothing else than the predominance of one of the elements of humanity during the time necessary for that element to complete its full development, there must be several epochs, because there are several elements. It remains to know how many epochs there are. What, in fact, can history develop, if not humanity? and what can it develop in humanity, if not the elements which constitute it? Consequently, what characters can it successively present, if not those of the diverse ideas which are the foundation, the law, and the rule of the human spirit?

For example, the idea of the finite is a necessary element of

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\* First Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 9 and 10, on *Mysticism*, p. 103.

thought. It will, therefore, be necessary that this element should have its complete historical development, that is, its special epoch, consecrated to the domination of the idea of the finite ; for it is impossible that this idea should have all its development, if it is not developed almost exclusively : suppose, in fact, that it may be developed at the same time with that of the infinite, the development of the infinite will shadow the development of the finite, and you will never arrive at a knowledge of all that the finite contains. Hence the necessity of a particular epoch, in which humanity pours, thus to speak, all that it does, all that it conceives, into the mould of the idea of the finite, and penetrates with this idea the different spheres which fill up the life of the whole epoch, of every people, of every individual ; that is, industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy. An epoch is complete when it unfolds the idea which has been given it to develop through all its spheres. Thus the epoch which ought to represent the idea of the finite in history, will impose it upon industry, the State, art, religion, philosophy ; and in the unity of this idea will be the unity of this epoch. Industry will not there be immobile and stationary, but progressive ; it will not be contented to receive from nature what nature shall spontaneously give ; fishery and pastoral life will not be sufficient for it ; it will torture the earth in order to wring from it the greatest possible amount of products ; and, moreover, it will torture these products in order to give them the form which best expresses the idea of the epoch. Commerce will develop itself there on a great scale ; all the nations which shall play a part in this epoch, will be nations more or less commercial ; and as the greatest bond of commerce is the sea—the empire of the finite, of variety, of movement—it will be the epoch of great maritime enterprises. Do not expect that the State will then be immobile, that laws and governments will press upon the individual with the weight of absolute unity, and will subject social life to the yoke of despotic uniformity. Far from that, variety and movement will pass even into the laws ; individual activity will have its rights ; it will be the age of liberty



and of democracy. It will be the same with art ; it will rather have the character of beauty than that of sublimity ; nothing colossal and gigantic, nothing immobile and uniform ; it will be progressive and mobile as the State and industry, and, like the State and industry, it will prize variety, it will love movement and measure. Of all the objects of imitation, that which it will oftenest reproduce will be man and the figure of man ; that is, the truest image of the finite, of movement, and of measure. Religion, then, will no longer be the religion of being in itself, of the invisible and the inaccessible God ; it will be that religion which transfers earth to heaven, and makes heaven an image of earth, divests the divinity of its majestic unity, divides it and expands it into the most diverse forms of worship. Hence polytheism, or the domination of the idea of variety and of the finite in religious representations. In vain does philosophy assume the air, in its abstractions, of being a stranger to its time ; it belongs to its time like all the rest ; and in an epoch of the world in which the idea of the finite shall be dominant, be assured that the dominant philosophy will be physics and psychology, the study of nature, and, above all, that of man, who shall regard himself as the centre and measure of all things.

Has the epoch come which ought to represent in history the idea of the infinite ? You will have a spectacle absolutely the reverse. There every thing being under the domination of the idea of the infinite, of unity, of being in itself, of the absolute, every thing will be more or less immobile. Industry will be feeble, and commerce, limited to the inevitable relations of men among themselves in the same country ; when they shall have taken from the earth any products, they will not run the risk of making any changes in that which God has given, or at least, they will make few changes. There will be little internal commerce, little or no maritime commerce ; the sea will play a very feeble part in the history of that epoch ; for the sea, especially the inland seas and the rivers, is the symbol of movement. The nations which shall fill up this epoch will be strongly attached to

their territory ; if they go out from it, it will be to flow forth like a torrent, but without fertilizing or guarding the countries which they might overrun. If the sciences have there any development, they will be the mathematical and astronomical sciences, which remind man more than others of the ideal, the abstract, the infinite. It will not be this epoch which will discover and cultivate with success experimental philosophy, chemistry, and the natural sciences. The State will then be the reign of absolute, fixed, immutable law : it will scarcely recognize individuals. The arts will be gigantic, and without proportion : they will in some sort disdain the representation of all that shall be finite ; they will launch out continually towards the infinite, and will attempt to represent it. Not being able to bring it under the form of the finite, they will make this form unnatural, and will render it fantastical in order to deprive it of its own character, and to constrain thought to bear itself towards something that is unmeasured and infinite. The religion of this epoch will attach itself to the invisible ; it will be much more the religion of death than of life. Life is varied, mobile, diverse, active ; religion will have less for its end to govern life, than to teach how to despise it, to exhibit it as a shadow without worth, as a miserable trial, scarcely even a trial : it will be composed, above all, of fantastic representations of what was before life, or of what will be after it. Philosophy will then be nothing else than the contemplation of absolute unity.

Finally, as I have shown you that these two elements of the finite and the infinite are not the only ones, that there is a third, the relation of the finite and the infinite, and as this relation is real, and plays an important part in thought, it will be necessary that in history it should also receive its development ; it will be necessary that an epoch should be given it. Conceive, then, a mixture of the two first epochs of the finite and the infinite, and you will have the industry, the State, the art, the religion, and the philosophy of this third epoch, all the species of industry, all the mathematical and natural sciences, territorial power and

maritime power, the preponderating force of the State, and individual liberty ; in religion, the present life will be referred to God, but at the same time there will be an application of religious dogma to morality, and this life will be regarded as real, and as having its price, and a price of immense value ; finally, in philosophy, you will have the reciprocal influence of psychology and ontology.

Such are the different epochs which are possible. As we can conceive only three elements in thought, we can conceive only three epochs in the development of thought by history ; we cannot conceive that other epochs could exist, or that there could be one less.

But understand me well : as beneath reflection, spontaneity always exists, and as in reflection the three elements of thought subsist, under the condition of the predominance of one of these ; so in each one of the epochs of the world, the two other elements exist without doubt, but subordinate and submitted to the element which is called to rule. There is no epoch in which one idea rules alone, to such an extent that no other idea might seem to exist. In every epoch is the finite and the infinite, and the relation of one to the other ; for there is life only in complexity ; but upon this common basis is the element detached whose hour has come, and which, in its contrast with all the other elements, and in its superiority to them all, gives its name to this epoch of history, and makes of it a particular epoch. Thus, do not imagine that when I speak of an epoch in which the infinite is dominant, I mean that the infinite is there alone without opposition ; but conceive at the same time that in every state of things there ought to be, as soon as there is a departure from the primitive unity, a predominant element. And as this element, in developing itself, necessarily encounters the other elements which aspire also to play the principal part, so the different epochs of humanity succeed each other only in making war upon each other, so the development of an element in a particular epoch takes place only by the war of this element with all the others.

All is in all : the three elements are in each epoch ; but each one of these, in order to run through its whole development, ought to have an epoch by itself. If, therefore, there are three elements, there can be only three epochs. Attempt to retrench one of these epochs ; in making only two great epochs, you will destroy the development of one of the elements of humanity, you will condemn humanity to a partial development. Is it possible, if the infinite is a considerable element of thought, that it should not occupy an entire epoch of history ? Do you suppose that any thing less than a long epoch of humanity would be required to bring to light all the motive principles of the idea of the infinite, all its degrees, and all its shades, to know all that it is, and all that it contains ? I ask you, if you can conceive of humanity without this fundamental side of itself, and of our history, without a large place accorded to the development of this sublime part of our nature ? Will you retrench the epoch in which the finite ought to rule ? The same absurdity occurs. The human race would, therefore, never be developed in all its liberty ! The human race would never have had an epoch to itself ! Or will you admit the existence of only these two epochs ? Will you neglect the relation of the finite and the infinite, and not give a particular epoch for the expression of this relation ? You condemn humanity to go continually from the infinite to the finite, or from the finite to the infinite, without its ever attempting to relate one to the other, and without its ever causing the cessation of the opposition which separates them ; you treat humanity worse than you treat yourself ; for each one of you is forced to shun every extremity, and, in place of elevating his life to the dominion of one or the other of these two ideas, you try to reunite them, and to express them both together. And would you not be willing that humanity should also understand this admirable harmony ? You cannot, therefore, retrench any one of the three great epochs into which we have divided the universal movement of history. Try, now, to add to them a fourth ; it is not in the power of thought, I do not say to

succeed in it, but even to attempt it; for thought is able to conceive of any thing, only by reason of the finite, of the infinite, and of the relation of the finite to the infinite. When we wish to go beyond the conditions of thought, we arrive at extravagant conceptions. And, again, there are extravagances which are impossible, those which would destroy or surpass the laws of the human spirit. The circle of extravagance is contained in the circle of hypothesis, and the circle of hypothesis in that of thought.

Thought is enchained to the three ideas which we have signalled. There are, therefore, only three great epochs; there can be only three, and there cannot be less than three; the demonstration is taken from the foundation itself of all demonstration, to wit, the human spirit and its laws. Verify, if you wish, this kind of demonstration by another. Consult the exterior world. Do you see there any thing else than the three elements which occupy our attention? Its eminent character is harmony. Harmony supposes unity and variety, not variety and unity separated from each other, but mingled together; it is the relation itself of variety and unity. Finally, in God also we have recognised these three same elements, a triplicity which develops itself in three movements essentially identical. Thus, God and nature, eternal reason and its exterior manifestation, present us the same results as the study of humanity. Because there are only three principles of movement in God, in nature, in man, history also can have but three principles of movement, three epochs.

If it has been proved that history contains three great epochs, in what order do they succeed each other, which commences and which finishes?

We cannot address ourselves solely to facts; for what will they give us? Nothing but themselves, neither their reason nor their necessity, that is, that which alone can enable us to comprehend them. It is therefore necessary, according to our ordinary method, to address ourselves to thought. In order to know how the different epochs of humanity succeed each other, let us

seek in what order the different elements of thought succeed each other in reflection.

The interior history of reflection is a history of humanity abridged ; exterior history only causes the manifestation of that, but it changes neither its nature nor its order. The question is therefore this : In consciousness are given to us at first, and in confusion, three elements, the *me* and the *not-me*, or the finite and the infinite, and their relation ; reflection, in applying itself to them, divides them in order to elucidate them, and examines them one by one. Which of these elements is it that solicits and preoccupies reflection ? It is absolutely impossible that it should be the relation of the finite and infinite : a relation, in order to be well comprehended, supposes that its two terms have been well understood ; for a relation has as many characters, shades, and degrees, as its two terms have themselves. It is therefore clear that reflection attaches itself to the relation of the finite and of the infinite only after having run through both ; so that in history, the epoch reserved for the attempt to reunite these two contrary elements, ought to come last : we have therefore only to determine the order of the two epochs that we are striving to class, whether it is the finite or the infinite, which predominates at first in reflection.

The finite, we have seen, is the *me* and the *not-me*. But we are not studying the history of external nature ; it is not, therefore, the term of the finite relative to nature, which it is necessary for us to consider, but the term which is related to humanity, that is, the *me*. The *me* is the sole representative of the finite. The question is thus reduced to the inquiry, whether it is the *me* or the infinite which rules at first in consciousness. Thus stated, the question is easily resolved. In fact, what is the *me* ? Voluntary and free activity. The *me*, or liberty, must have long exercise in order to emancipate itself from the bonds of the *not-me*, of the external world ; and in order to arrive at that point of force and confidence in itself, which can give it illusive confidence in its own power. Certainly that is not the work of a day. Add to this,

that what liberty and the *me* disengage, is precisely reflection, and reflection must have time. The more reflection increases and strengthens itself, the more the sentiment of the *me* and of liberty will become firm and extended ; but it is not necessary at the beginning of reflection to suppose the existence of that which can only be the fruit of a tardy and laborious development. New-born reflection is yet feeble and ill-assured, as well as liberty and the *me*. The *me* is rather a spectator than an actor in the first act of reflection. Assuredly it is not necessary that it should occupy the stage alone. One day it will be far gone in illusive confidence in itself ; but it is very modest in commencing. It is then indeed forced, so feeble, small, pitiable it is ! Man, therefore, is not dominant in new-born reflection ; it follows, of necessity, that it should be the infinite, God.

The very obscurity which accompanies the idea of the infinite, adds to its power over the soul ; every other sentiment languishes before that ; the idea of absolute being at first stifles all others. The first light of reflection showing to man his own feebleness and the grandeur of God, charms him away from himself, with the all-powerful preoccupation of this sublime object, which he knows well that he has not made, and which is beyond him, one, immutable, invariable, eternal. The *me*, unable to attribute these majestic and terrible characters to itself, annihilates itself in this fearful intuition ; humanity is eclipsed in its own eyes in the presence of a being who alone is in possession of the infinite, of omnipotence, of eternity, of existence, and of absolute unity. Man does not begin by taking himself for the God of his consciousness ; he begins with a conception undoubtedly vague, but powerful and overwhelming, of God ; and, under the weight of this great idea, he scarcely considers himself as even a shadow of him who alone exists. Behold how things succeed each other in the consciousness of the individual, and they succeed each other the same in the history of the human race. Humanity, finding itself at first weak and miserable, places no estimation upon itself. Scarcely detached from the eternal principle of things, it is not

itself which preoccupies it, but the principle to which it still clings; it exists for itself almost as if it existed not. The first epoch of humanity is necessarily filled with the idea of the infinite, with the idea of unity, with the idea of the absolute, and of eternity. It is an epoch of immobility for the human race. Life, this fugitive life which it has not yet enjoyed, appears to it only a pale reflection of another existence. As it is, and believes itself to be, feeble, it produces only feeble things, which add to its consciousness of its own impotence; and thus it plunges the deeper into the sentiment of its misery and of its nothingness. But insensibly, after having lived in this world as in a tomb, as in a prison, it perceives, however, that this tomb, this prison, is large; it moves there; little by little it uses the liberty that is in it, and little by little appears the grandeur inherent in liberty. This liberty strengthens itself by exercise; humanity begins to feel the beauty of life and of the world; and the charm of the world and of life, the sentiment intoxicating by its own force, makes it forget all the rest. Then arrives the reign of personality, the epoch of the finite; you conceive that this epoch must be the second, and cannot be the first. When these two epochs have endured their time, the third will come, which can no longer be either the rule of the infinite or that of the finite. Humanity never recoils; but having exhausted the extremes, knowing itself in all its force as well as in all its weakness, it arrives at the tardy conception of the necessary relation between the finite and the infinite; hence an epoch which, without being either the first or the second, reconciles them and sums them up, unfolds and stamps everywhere upon industry, upon the State, upon art, upon religion, upon philosophy, the relation of the finite and the infinite; and in history gives to this relation its own expression, its own empire.

Such is the order in which the epochs of humanity succeed each other; this order of succession covers another still more profound. The order of succession is purely external; it represents, thus to speak, the material mechanism of history. But I have shown how variety springs from unity, the finite from the



infinite, relative being from absolute being ; I have shown that unity, the infinite, being in itself absolute substance, being cause also and absolute cause, could not have produced variety, the finite, the relative ; so that true unity and veritable infinity being given, you have already in the germ variety and the finite, that is, finite and varied causes, a world animated and full of forces, and a humanity which is itself an active and productive power. So the epochs of humanity not only sustain, one towards another, a relation of succession, they are bound to each other by a relation of generation. The first epoch of humanity begets the second ; in other terms, the results of the whole species produced by the first become the germ of the second, the base upon which it works ; and the fecund remains of the two first epochs, combined together, serve for the cradle of the third. Thus history is not only a sublime geometry, it is a living geometry, an organic whole, the different members of which are wholes which have their life apart ; and which are, at the same time, so intimately penetrated with each other that they form the unity of general life. The truth of history is the expression of this general life ; it is, therefore, not a dead truth which such or such an age can perceive ; each century successively engenders it ; time alone can draw it forth entire from the harmonious work of ages, and it is nothing less than the progressive birth of humanity.

What do I say ! History reflects not only the whole movement of humanity ; but as humanity is the summary of the universe, which is itself a manifestation of God, in the last analysis history is nothing less than the last counter-stroke of divine action. The admirable order which reigns there is a reflection of eternal order, and its laws have for their last principle God himself. God, considered in his perpetual action upon the world and upon humanity, is Providence. It is because God or Providence is in nature, that nature has its necessary laws ; it is because Providence is in humanity and in history, that humanity and history have their necessary laws. This necessity, which the vulgar accuse, which they confound with external and physical fatality,

and by which they designate and disfigure the divine Wisdom, applied to the world, this necessity is the unanswerable demonstration of the intervention of Providence in human affairs, the demonstration of a moral government of the world. Great events are the decrees of this government, promulgated by the voice of time. History is the manifestation of God's supervision of humanity; the judgments of history are the judgments of God himself. God has willed that humanity should have a regular development, that it might reflect something of himself, something of the intellectual and the intelligible, God being intelligence in his essence, in his eternal movement, and in his fundamental motive principles. Now, if history is the government of God made visible, every thing is there in its place; and if every thing is there in its place, every thing is there for good, for every thing arrives at an end, marked by a beneficent power. Hence, this historic optimism which I have the honor to profess, which is nothing less than the idea itself of civilization in relation with its first and last principle, with Him who has made it in making humanity, and who has formed every thing with weight and measure, for the greatest good of all things. Either history is an insignificant phantasmagoria, and then it is a bitter and cruel mockery, or it has meaning, it is reasonable; and if it is reasonable, it has laws, and necessary and beneficent laws, for every law must have these characters. To maintain the contrary is a blasphemy against existence and its author.

## LECTURE VIII.

## THE PART OF GEOGRAPHY IN HISTORY.

**Return to the historic system sketched in the last lecture. Method which it gave. Beauty of history thus conceived; its morality; its scientific character.—Unjust contempt expressed by philosophers for history. Refutation of Malebranche.—Rules of history. Fundamental rule: nothing is insignificant; every thing has a meaning; every thing is related to some idea.—Application of this rule to physical geography. Every place, taken on a great scale, represents an idea, one of the three ideas to which all ideas must be referred.—General question of the relation of places to man.—Climates. Defence and explanation of the opinion of Montesquieu.—Determination of places and climates which correspond with the three great epochs of history.**

In the last lecture I enumerated and classified all the epochs of history; I demonstrated that there are three epochs, neither more nor less, in history; that these three epochs sustain towards each other an invariable relation of succession, and even that this relation of succession covers another more profound and more intimate, the relation of generation; so that the entire history of humanity is resolved into a great movement composed of three moments, which not only succeed each other, but also engender each other. Such is the system of history; and this system I have not borrowed from airy views and from chimerical combinations, but from the principle itself, and the only possible measure of history, humanity. This method would bear the rigorous application of the method of observation and induction. In fact, you have seen that I have drawn it entirely from consciousness of humanity. There also we are upon the solid ground of facts; but of what facts? Of facts which, aside from the advantage of being observable like external facts, have yet that of being surrounded by an immediate light, and of carrying their

authority with themselves. This is the point from which we started ; is the result of the induction to which we have had recourse. You know that, in the physical sciences, induction rests upon the supposition of the constancy of the laws of nature.\* A fact takes place, and you make an induction, you transfer it to the future ; you foresee identical facts, you affirm that what has taken place to-day will take place to-morrow, that the sun which rises to-day will shine to-morrow upon the world. This induction supposes that the laws of nature are constant to themselves. So, here, the induction which I have made of humanity to history is founded upon a single supposition, that of the constancy of the laws of humanity. If human nature, like external nature, is constant to itself, there can be in its historical development only what is in its psychological development : one is the measure of the other. Now, in consciousness there are three terms in a certain order. Therefore, there can be in history only three terms, in the same order with that which consciousness has given us. This is not an abstract system ; it is, indeed, a real system, because it is supported by the very centre of all real thought, consciousness. Consciousness is the reality most immediate and most certain for us ; and when we transfer it into history, we do nothing else than to follow the principle of all reality, wherever it conducts us.

Nay, more ; as history has been referred to human nature, so that has been referred to external nature, in the bosom of which it is made visible. Man is not the effect, and nature the cause, we have seen ; but there is between nature and man a manifest harmony of general characters, of general laws. There is more yet : just as we have related humanity to nature, so we have been able to refer this external nature and human nature, with their characters and general laws, to a common principle from

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\* Upon the principle of the stability of the laws of nature, see particularly the 1st Series, Vol. 4th, Lecture 20, page 382 ; and Lecture 22, page 484.

which nature and man emanate ; and in this principle we have found in germ, under the form of substantial and undeveloped powers, all the elements which later, fallen into time and space, will constitute the forces and the laws of nature, the forces and the laws of humanity. Hence the history of our species, the history of this particular being, limited and bounded, which we call man, this history is allied to this vast universe, and by this vast universe to the Author of all things.

Thus history is not an anomaly in the general order ; it is verifiable in all its degrees by all the degrees of universal existence, as these degrees are verifiable by one another. Are you in doubt with respect to the essential characters of the divinity ? Address yourself to the world, for the effect ought to reflect more or less the cause. Are you in doubt with respect to the characters of the world ? Address yourself to humanity, for humanity agrees with it, and ought to express it. Are you in doubt with respect to the order and the course of history ? Address yourself at once to humanity, to nature, and to divinity. Prove and master without cessation all these degrees of general order, one by the other ; this verification will constantly give you the same result. You see that history reproduces the successive movements of universal existence in the succession of its epochs. History thus conceived is eminently beautiful ; it is admirable poetry, the drama or the epopee of the human race.

Not only is history thus conceived beautiful, but then also, and only then, has it a high morality. In fact, deny or weaken the system of history, deny or weaken its laws and its plan, and you will break or loosen the cord which binds history to humanity and to the world, and thereby to God. God, considered without relation with the world and humanity, undoubtedly still exists, he exists wholly in the depths of his essence, invisible, inaccessible, incomprehensible ; but this is no longer the God of the world and the God of humanity ; it is no longer a God who overlooks and superintends his work, the God whom men adore and bless under the name of providence. Upon what condition does

providence exist? Upon the condition that God, without, it is true, thus exhausting his being, passes into the world and into humanity, and, consequently, into history; that he there deposits something of himself, that he establishes there wisdom, justice, and order, an order invariable as its author. Providence is involved in the question of the necessity of the laws of history. To deny the one is to shake the other, is to reverse or obscure the moral and divine government of human things. If, therefore, any one should dare to give to our system the names of pantheism and of fatalism, that is, indirectly, or rather very directly, should accuse us of atheism, it would be necessary, in order to defend ourselves, to throw back in our turn this amiable accusation upon those who make it: for the true God with us, is a God in relation with humanity, a providence; and providence cannot be exiled from history, for God's purposes in regard to humanity need a development of humanity in history. Now, if providence is in history, it is very necessary that it should be there with a plan, with a fixed plan, that is, with necessary laws. The necessity of the laws of history, with their high character of wisdom and justice, is the visible form of providence in history.

Thus the system which I have developed to you is alone moral, at the same time that it is alone beautiful; I will add, that it is alone scientific. In fact, that which constitutes science, is the suppression of every anomaly, order substituted for that which is arbitrary, reality for appearance, reason for the senses and the imagination, particular phenomena recalled and elevated to their general laws.

History is therefore beautiful, moral, scientific. Considered under this point of view, it presents itself to the regard of a philosopher as a worthy object of study and meditation.

One day Father Malebranche, entering into the apartment of a young man, who was afterwards the illustrious Chancellor D'Aguesseau, found him occupied in reading Thucydides; upon which the good and pleasant Malebranche got somewhat in a passion, and reproached his young friend with seeking only amusements

for his imagination, with stopping like a child at accidental facts, which might or might not have happened, instead of occupying himself with himself, with man, with his destiny, with God, in fact, with the ideas of philosophy. And D'Aguesseau, I think, quit Thucydides for Descartes. If I had been in his place I would have taken Descartes very willingly, but I would have kept Thucydides, and that upon the very strength of the system of Malebranche. I should have been able to reply to Malebranche: "How does it happen that you, a philosopher, should thus despise history? You see all things in God, and with some explanation you are right. But if every thing is in God, it seems that God must be in every thing, that he must be in this world, and especially in humanity, in every thing that belongs to humanity, and, consequently, in its history. The study of history is, therefore, essentially a philosophical study." I know not what, with his principles, Malebranche could have responded to this. I regard history as the counterproof of philosophy, as a philosophy altogether; and it is from this point of view that I take the essential rule of history.

Every thing has a reason for being, every thing has its idea, its principle, its law; nothing is insignificant, every thing has its meaning; it is this meaning which we must work to decipher, it is this meaning which the philosophic historian has the task and the mission to discern, to disengage, to bring to light. The world of ideas is concealed in the world of facts. Facts, in themselves, are insignificant; but, fertilized by reason, they manifest the idea which they envelop, become reasonable, intelligible; they are no longer, then, simple facts which fall under the observation of the senses, they are ideas which reason comprehends. One does well to re-collect facts as they occur; they are the material of history, but not history itself. History, properly so called; history, *par excellence*; history, worthy of the name (*ἱστορία*, from *ἵστημι*, *histēmi*, to know), is the science of the relation of facts to ideas. The first duty of the philosophic historian is, therefore, to demand of facts what they signify, the idea which they express, the rela-

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which they sustain with the spirit of the epoch of the world, the bosom of which they make their appearance. To recall every fact, even the most minute, to its general law, to the law which alone causes it to be; to examine its relation with other facts, referred also to their law; and from relations to relations to arrive at seizing the relation of the most fugitive particularity to the most general idea of an epoch, is the lofty rule of history. This rule divides itself into as many particular rules as the general idea of an epoch is able to have great manifestations. Now, the spirit of an epoch manifests itself under three conditions. At first it is necessary that the spirit of an epoch, in order to be effective, take possession of space, establish itself in it, and occupy a portion, more or less considerable, of this world; it must find its place, its theatre: that is the very condition of the drama of history. But upon this theatre there must appear some one to play the piece; this some one is humanity, that is, the masses. The masses are the basis of humanity; it is with them, in them, and for them, that every thing is done; they fill the stage of history, but they play there only as dumb figures; they have only a part, and leave, thus to speak, expression to certain eminent



finite, or the relation of the finite to the infinite ; such is the formula which the philosophy of history imposes upon every place, such is the formula which I pledge myself to bring forth from every given place : or, it would be necessary that this place should be insignificant, that is, that it should want a reason for being and a law. Now, I know of nothing in the world which has no reason for being, which has no law ; and every law can be expressed by a philosophic formula. These philosophic formulas frighten the senses, the imagination, and those shadows of ideas which the associations of the senses and the imagination engender, and which usurp the appearance of common sense. And above all, these formulas, so frightful in their first appearance, are only reason in all its rigor, good sense elevated to the highest power. In fact, what I have just said to you in the language of metaphysics, you have said to yourselves a hundred times ; all the world knows it and repeats it ; and the paradoxical formula of science resolves itself then into a prejudice of common sense.

Disregard the words, consider only the ideas. Which one of you believes that the land which he inhabits, the air which he breathes, the mountains or the rivers which are his neighbors, the climate and all the impressions which result from it ; in a word, that the external world is indifferent to him, and exercises upon him no influence ? It would be on your part an idealism somewhat extraordinary ; I imagine that you think with all the world that the soul is distinct from, but not absolutely independent of the body. Do you think, and does any one ever think that the man of the mountains has, and could have the same habits, the same character, the same ideas as the man of the plain, of the river-side, of the island ? Do you suppose that the man whom the fires of the torrid zone consume, might be called to the same destiny in this world, as he who inhabits the desert icy regions of Siberia ? Well ! that which is true of these two extremes of the frigid and of the torrid zone ought to be equally true of two intermediate places, and of all latitudes.

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as far reason has the advantage of agreeing with prejudice, it is much for it. Yes, give me the map of a country, its situation, its climate, its waters, its winds, its natural productions, its botany, its zoology, and all its physical geography, I pledge myself to tell you what will be the man of this country and what place this country will occupy in history. A man on whom none will accuse of having been lost in philosophic reveries, who joined to the most determined spirit those great views which the mass of thinkers see only an ardent imagination, which are nothing less than the quick and piercing glances of genius; a man who will play no great part in the annals of physics, the victor of Arcola and Marengo, rendering an account to posterity of his true or simulated designs upon that which must have been dear to him for more reasons than he commences by a description of the Italian territory, from which he draws all the past history of Italy, and the only noble plan which could ever be traced for her grandeur or prosperity. I know few pages of history more beautiful than that.\* To this authority I will add that of Montesquieu, one of the men of our country who has best comprehended

being admitted, Montesquieu follows it into all its consequences; how, descending from the heights of a general idea, he applies it to all human institutions, civil, religious, and military, to the smallest as well as the greatest laws. This is the triumph of the philosophic spirit. In fact, there are no vacant places that separate things; they are all tied and held together. There begins to spread among us, upon the ruins of materialism, I know not what sentimental and pusillanimous spiritualism, good for children and women, and which would be no less fatal to true science than materialism. I shall combat one with as much firmness as I have combated the other. Undoubtedly, the relation of man and nature is not a relation of effect to cause, but man and nature are two great effects which, coming from the same cause, bear the same characters; so that the earth, and he who inhabits it, man and nature, are in perfect harmony. It is thus, it is only thus that the thought of Montesquieu must be understood.

Such a climate given, such a people follows. I conclude from this that two different places represent different ideas, and that consequently if we wish to search in this vast universe for the theatre of the three great epochs into which we have divided the development of humanity, we shall not be able to place in the same country and under the same climate these three epochs so dissimilar. There are three different epochs, therefore three different theatres for these three epochs. We have the epoch of the infinite, that of the finite, and that of the relation between the infinite and the finite. Where shall we place the first? Let us seek a theatre for this epoch of humanity which ought to represent the infinite, unity, immobility.

Let us attempt to give as a theatre for the epoch of the infinite, if you will permit me to express myself thus, some countries consisting of border-lands, the banks of great rivers, the coasts of seas that are sufficiently large to excite enterprise, but not so vast as to discourage it and weary it out. An arm of the sea is not a barrier as it is usually supposed; it is a tie between na-

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which has the appearance of separating them, and which  
ers them towards each other without confounding them.  
old extended border-lands, considerable rivers, an inland sea;  
to these, mountains, sufficiently elevated to shade the sun  
to form diversities, and not so high as to hinder easy and  
uent communication; I ask if you would intrust to these  
es the development of the epoch of the infinite. What!  
every thing be immobile on this theatre of movement?  
at! will the human race be stationary where nature is active  
continually exciting to action? Will there be little indus-  
and commerce in the presence of this sea which invites man,  
ght of those opposite shores which call him to perpetual ex-  
ges? Will a taste be formed for the gigantic where nature  
ll sides is circumscribed and measured? What! will man  
his works have the character of absolute unity and of uniform-  
where every thing tends to division, where every thing in-  
es the sentiment of variety and of life? I ask if reason can  
ent to such a hypothesis? Vary the hypothesis: seek a  
tre for the epoch of history which ought to represent the  
of the finite, of movement, of activity, of liberty, of individu-

evidently there will not be sufficient play for all the extremes, and for all the relations of all the extremes ?

I ask if you are able to accept these hypotheses, if you are able to conceive that a small island may at once be a great territorial and maritime power ? I ask you if it is in border countries that you will place immobility, and upon the plateau of immense mountains the seat of movement ? All this is impossible ; reason absolutely rejects it. Therefore places have also their laws, and when a place has a particular character, it irresistibly produces a certain human development ; or, to express myself more exactly, it necessarily coincides with a particular human development. The epoch of the infinite will have therefore for its theatre an immense continent, all the parts of which will be compact, immobile and indivisible as unity ; and as it will necessarily border upon some sea, it will border upon the ocean, and will contain with immense deserts almost impassable mountains. On the other hand, the epoch of the finite will occupy border countries, the shores of some inland sea ; for inland seas, representing the crisis and the fermentation of nature, are the natural centre, the bond and the rallying point of the great movements of civilization and of humanity. Finally, be assured that the epoch which ought to represent in history the relation of the finite to the infinite, will be a considerable continent, sufficiently and not too compact, of very proportionate length and breadth, which, bordering on the ocean, will also have inland seas, great rivers which traverse the land in every direction, so that movement and immobility, so that duration and time, so that the finite and the infinite might find there their place, so that nothing remains in a state of frozen unity, and so that nothing is dissolved, so that every thing endures, and, at the same time, so that every thing develops itself, so that all the extremes may be there and with their harmony.

Three epochs there are of civilization, therefore three different theatres for these three epochs ; and if these epochs succeed each other, as we have shown, it will be necessary that civilization

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ld go from one theatre to another, and should make the tour  
e world, in following the physical movements of lands and  
ates, corresponding to that of the epochs such as we have  
rmined it. History is opened with the epoch of the infinite  
of unity; therefore civilization must have commenced upon  
gh and immense continent in order to expand itself over the  
as, and to arrive at the centre of the world's movement and  
entation, and then to go out from this whirlpool of the history  
the globe, if I can thus express myself, not for the purpose  
eturning upon the mountains whence it descended (for hu-  
ty never turns back), but to march on, into unknown re-  
s, and, rich with the treasures it has received in its course,  
ome to deposit them in another continent, which, by its va-  
d configuration, by its exquisite temperature, by the mixture  
as and lands, of mountains and plains, may be propitious for  
complete and harmonious development of humanity.  
et us advance. Behold the theatre prepared; behold this  
e marvellously arranged and distributed to receive him who  
lled to act upon it so great a part.

## LECTURE IX.

## NATIONS.

**Subject of the Lecture:**—Philosophy of history applied to the study of nations.—Discarding the question of a primitive people. —Idea of a nation, development of this idea in all the constituent elements of a nation, and first, in industry, laws, art, and religion.—To seize the relations of these elements to each other, their relations of anteriority or of posteriority, of superiority or of inferiority, especially their harmony. Philosophy, reflecting all the elements of a nation's civilization, is its last expression. The resemblances, and especially the differences of the various nations of the same epoch.—The idea of war.—Motives for the celebrity of great battles.—Morality of victory.—Historical importance of war, of the military regulations of a people, even of the mode of warfare.

In the last lecture I rapidly indicated the general relations which bind physical geography to history; it is our purpose to-day, upon this stage of the world thus prepared, to observe the action of nations, and to determine the general aspects under which nations present themselves and recommend themselves to philosophy of history.

Is there but one primitive people, that is, a single race, and consequently a single language, a single religion, a single philosophy, which, starting from only one centre and a single focus, spread themselves successively over the whole face of the globe, so that civilization may have been produced by means of communication, and history may be only a tradition; or indeed has history any other foundation than human nature, the nature which is common to us all, and which, everywhere the same, but everywhere modified, develops itself everywhere with its harmonies and its differences? Such is the first question which philosophy of history encounters on its way. In my opinion this question is more embarrassing than important. In

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whether different nations and a varied civilization start from a single source, or whether this variety may have human nature for its single root, it is at all events certain that this primitive people, or this common nature, has terminated in different developments, and these different developments alone fall under the cognizance of history. The historic element, we have already seen, is the element of difference. Suppose, therefore, primitive people, or a nature essentially identical; yet you are unable to hold fast there; it is necessary that you should arrive at different developments, that is, at differences, in order to arrive at history. Now, as there are three different epochs in history, it follows that for these three epochs essentially different, there must be, leaving untouched the question of the common foundation of history and of nations, there must, I repeat, necessarily be three very distinct orders of population. I say, three orders of population, and not three nations, because if each epoch is one in the sense in which there is one element of human nature which prevails over all the other elements, one idea which, ruling over all the other ideas, gives to them all its own character, it is not less true that there exists, by the side of, or under the



elements of an epoch ought to sustain with each other to constitute the differences and the real life of this epoch.

The philosophy of history, in order to comprehend well an epoch, and the different nations of this epoch, divides them at first, takes each one apart, and examines it. What does it demand of each nation? Under how many aspects does it consider it? There are four, in my opinion, which, by their importance, claim a particular attention. I will rapidly indicate them.

Philosophy of history in regarding a nation ought to recognize before all why this nation has come into the world, what it has there to do, what end it pursues, what idea it represents. Remark, that if this nation does not represent an idea, its existence is simply unintelligible; the events by which it develops itself, having no common end, have no common measure, and form then a perpetual diversity without any common unity, that is, without any possibility of being comprehended. In order to comprehend the different events which take place in a nation, we must be able to refer them to some common idea; and this idea is that which this nation is called to represent. Thus to demand of a nation what it comes to do in this world, what destiny it ought to accomplish, what idea it represents, is the first rule of the philosophy of history. Behold the second.

If every nation is called to represent an idea, the events of which the life of this nation is composed, aspire to and end at the complete representation of this idea; whence it follows that the order in which these events succeed each other is a true order of progression; it is this progress which it is necessary to recognize and follow, under penalty of not comprehending any thing important in the history of this nation. Let me suppose, for example, that you knew not that the Roman nation had been called to represent upon the earth such or such an idea, to attain such or such an end, consequently to pursue and accomplish it by a continuous progress; then, when you are at the wars of Sylla and Marius, you know not whether you are at the commencement, the middle, or the end of Roman history;

you are not able to find your place in this history, except by regarding the number of the volume and the number of the page. An end being given, the history of a nation is a perpetual progress. It is this which is all light; I add, it is this which is all interest; for true interest is in the connection and the development of things, and every development is progress. It is not necessary to stop at the vague idea of perfecting; for, as we have demonstrated,\* we are able to measure perfectibility only so far as we have measured the type of perfection. Now, the type of the relative perfection of a nation, is the idea which this nation ought to accomplish. Every thing leads us back to search for the idea of each nation, and for the progressive movement of this nation towards the accomplishment of this idea.

Now, it is with a nation as with an individual. An individual is not complete unless he has developed in himself, according to the measure of his abilities, the idea of the useful, of the just, of the beautiful, of the holy, of the true. A nation is not complete unless it unfolds, thus to speak, the idea which it is called to represent, by industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy: the development of a nation is accomplished only when it has exhausted all these spheres of activity. Therefore philosophy of history, if it would understand a nation well, after having determined the idea of this nation, and after being well penetrated with the principle that this nation accomplishes this idea progressively, ought to search out and follow this progress in each one of the five elements which I have just mentioned; and at first in industry, in the laws, in art, and in religion.

And it is not sufficient for the philosophy of history to examine these five elements one after the other, it is necessary that it should compare them with each other in order to seize their relations, for these relations are far from being insignificant. It is necessary that it should examine whether such or such an element precedes the others or follows them, which rules or which

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\* Lecture 6 of this Vol., p. 150.

is subordinate ; it is necessary that it should search out, above all, the relation between the religious element and the political element ; whether religion precedes and governs the other elements, which are then, in some manner, grouped about it ; or whether, on the contrary, it is the political element which rules at first or which ends by ruling all the others.

It is in considering a nation under these different points of view, and which, above all, are intimately bound together, that philosophy of history will shun the partial and confined views which have so often led it astray. Often the historian, preoccupied with a particular interest, for example, political interest, considers in a nation the political element almost exclusively ; or, preoccupied with the idea of religion, he considers almost exclusively the religious element ; and then either he neglects all the other elements and mutilates history, or, without neglecting them, he imposes on them all the character which he borrows from the only element which he considers, and if he does not mutilate history, he falsifies it. In this case, history is very clear, for I know no surer means of clearness than the predominance of a particular idea. Philosophy of history ought to embrace all—industry, laws, arts, religion ; but we conceive that its last result, that is, the last formula under which it sums up a nation, reflecting the characters, at once harmonious and various, of several ideas, cannot have the simplicity which easily accompanies exclusive formulas. Will you consider a nation only on the political side ? Even the most elevated political formula is not very embarrassing. It is more difficult to comprehend and express the fundamental idea of the religion of a people, and we enter at once upon paths more sombre. We are in paths not less obscure when we would penetrate the intricate and mysterious sense of the monuments of the arts. But there is another order of research, more obscure still in appearance, although all true light is in it ; I mean to speak of metaphysics.

The thought of man develops itself in different ways, but it arrives at a comprehension of itself only when, in regard to every

thing that it has conceived, it asks itself: Is all this true in itself? What is the foundation of all this? What are the principal secrets, that is, the general ideas which all these things envelop? And is it possible to elevate these ideas to a higher degree of generality still? for it is necessary to stop only at the impassable boundaries of thought, that is, at what is most general, at the highest abstraction, at the highest simplicity. There, undoubtedly, every thing is obscure for the senses and the imagination; but there, also, all is lucid for reflection. In regard to every subject, so long as we have not arrived at the elementary ideas of this subject, at its metaphysics, we have arrived at the foundation of nothing, we are ignorant of the last expression of every thing.

But with what are metaphysics occupied? Take the books of metaphysics; I do not say to you: Take such or such a book, but take any one you choose, take Plato or Aristotle, take Malebranche or Leibnitz; do more: open Condillac; certainly he is not incomprehensible from his profundity. What are the problems that he tries to solve? Of what does he speak? What does he say? That there are in thought only ideas of sensation generalized, that is, particular ideas added to each other, that is, contingent ideas. According to Condillac, every thing is contingent, variable, finite. Condillac denies the infinite, unity, substance, etc., and reduces every thing to the indefinite, to the finite multiplied by itself, to a simple collection of quantities and accidents,\* etc. I do not invent, I relate. On the other hand, take idealism; it admits with great reluctance the contingent, the multiple, the finite, and plunges into the depths of the cause, of the one, of the necessary, of the absolute, of being in itself. Behold the field of metaphysics, behold its language. It is not I who have created these problems or these terms, I accept them from the hand of centuries; and when fine wits, in the fastidiousness which they mistake for wise circumspection, accuse these formulas, they accuse, therefore, philosophy itself; for ever since the

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\* On Condillac, see 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 2 and 3.

day of its birth it has treated of no other subjects, it has used no other language. From Kapila\* to Aristotle, from Aristotle to Kant, the matter and language of metaphysics have not changed, for the end of metaphysics has remained the same, to wit, to reduce thought to its essential elements; and its elements, always pretty nearly the same, assume always pretty nearly the same expressions.

You see, either it is necessary to pretend that in every epoch philosophy is arbitrary and insignificant; that philosophers are idlers who draw at hazard from their reveries a certain number of systems, without relation with the spirit of the times, without relation with the other elements of the civilization of a nation; or, if you do not dare to maintain this assertion, if you admit that philosophy is in intimate relation with the epoch and the people which produced it, I will ask you if philosophy does not reflect the whole contemporaneous civilization under the form most general, most abstract, most simple, and, consequently, in reality clearest. All our preceding lectures terminate in this result. Do you admit it? Then behold the conclusion which it reasonably imposes upon you; it is, that when we characterize a nation or an epoch by its philosophy, we draw from their bosom that which was contained there, that which, developing itself at first in the external form of art, of religion, of industry, and politics, returns upon itself, in its generality and its profundity, under the philosophic form. Now, what are philosophic formulas? We have seen that they are the contingent and the necessary, they are substance and cause, the absolute and the relative, the infinite and the finite. The philosophy of history is, therefore, condemned to speak also this language, to regard the metaphysics of a nation, or to be ignorant of this nation in its most elevated and most certain expression.

When we have studied and recognized industry, the arts, the government, the religion, the philosophy of a nation, we know

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\* See, in this Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 5.

in itself; it is then necessary to compare it with the other nations which are embraced in the same epoch of the world. Every epoch is one, as every nation is one, in its fundamental idea, and at the same time it is diverse by reason of the diverse ideas which ought also to play their part there: it ought to contain different nations to represent different ideas; it is therefore necessary to examine the relations of different nations of the same epoch with each other. They necessarily have resemblances greater than their differences, because all belong to one and the same epoch. Philosophy of history must seize these resemblances. But it ought not to stop at vague and general resemblances; it ought to search out in detail what in these different nations are the corresponding characters of industry, of laws, of arts, of religions, of philosophic systems. When philosophy of history shall have thus studied the industry, the laws, the arts, the religions, the philosophic systems of the different nations of an epoch, it will see that all these elements have a marvellous analogy. The results obtained by the profound examination of a particular nation will not be changed, they will be ennobled. The more elements there are in a nation

different ideas. Each nation represents one idea, and not another. This idea, general in itself, is particular relatively with those which the other nations of the same epoch represent ; it is particular, it is itself and not another, and in this respect it excludes every other than itself ; it excludes it so far as it either does not understand it or rejects it. Every idea which rules in a nation rules there as the single idea which represents for this nation the whole truth ; and, above all, far from being the whole truth, it represents it only on one side, and in an imperfect manner, as that which is particular and bounded has to represent universal and absolute truth.

How do these differences of different nations subsist together ? Are they not able to coexist in peace ? No, for upon what condition can an incomplete and exclusive idea live in peace by the side of another exclusive and incomplete idea ? It is upon the condition of being recognized by philosophy as incomplete and exclusive, and at the same time accepted by philosophy as containing a portion of truth. To the eyes of philosophy all exclusive ideas are false on one side and true on another ; it accepts them all, combines them and reconciles them in the bottom of a vast system where each one finds its place. That which a wise philosophy does, history does also, by the aid of centuries, in its universal movement, and in the ample system it engenders and successively unrolls. But it is not so with a nation : a nation is neither an eclectic philosophy nor entire humanity ; it is only a particular people ; it takes, therefore, for true that which is only relatively true ; it holds as absolute truth that which, being only relative truth with the pretension of being absolute truth, is an error.

The particular ideas of the different nations of the same epoch do not know themselves as particular ideas, that is, as exclusive and false, but regarding themselves as true, that is, as complete and absolute, they aspire to dominion, and encounter each other in this pretension of being alone true, and alone worthy of dominion. In that is the indestructible root of war.

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which for philosophy is only a distinction, in the hands of is a hostile principle, and diversities and differences become, upon the theatre of history, oppositions, contradictions, and conflicts. This is not less true in regard to the internal life of a nation than in the external relations of nations with each other. We have distinguished as the elements of a nation's life, industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy ; we have spoken of their relations of coexistence, of their relations of predominance, of subordination, and we have described these relations with the calmness of philosophy. But these elements do not take it to themselves ; no one is willing to be subordinate ; it is not even sufficient for them to coexist with independence and with harmony ; they strive to conquer and absorb each other. Thus industry, wholly occupied with utility, would reduce to that all the rest ; the State continually encroaches upon and attempts to draw all into its sphere ; religion, daughter of heaven, cannot consent to circumscribe its empire, and thinks it has the right to give laws to industry, to the State, and to art, which last, on its side, sacrifices every thing to the sentiment of beauty and to its particular interests. Philosophy is very peaceable, especially in Diogenes



of different nations, in this concussion, the idea which shall be most feeble will be destroyed by the strongest, that is, will be absorbed by it; now the strongest idea in an epoch is necessarily that which is most in accordance with the spirit itself of this epoch. Each nation represents an idea; the different nations of the same epoch represent different ideas; the nation which represents the idea most in accordance with the general spirit of the epoch, is the nation called to dominion. When the idea of a nation has served its time, this nation disappears; but it does not easily give up its place, it is necessary that another nation should dispute with it its place, and should wrest its place from it; hence war. The defeat of a nation that has served its time, the victory of a nation that has its time to serve, and is called to empire,—behold the certain and inevitable effect of war.

I make no apology for war, I explain it. Again, if ideas are the prizes in war, and if that which wins is necessarily that which has the most future, it is necessary that that should win, and for this end that there should be war; unless you should wish to retard the future, to arrest civilization; unless you should wish that the human race might be immobile and stationary. The hypothesis of a state of perpetual peace in the human race is the hypothesis of absolute immobility. Take away all war, and in place of three epochs there will be only one; for it is clear that one will not willingly give place to another, and there will never be but one and the same epoch. There will not only be but one epoch, but in that there will be no progress; for the differences will not be blended, and each nation will eternally remain in the brutishness of the particular and exclusive idea which subjugates it, and which, good for a time, if it should never be modified, would be the condemnation of this nation to perpetual error. Thus a nation is progressive only on the condition of war. It is not I, but history, that says war is nothing else than the bloody exchange of ideas; a battle is nothing else than the combat of error with truth; I say with truth, because in an epoch a less error is a truth relatively to a greater error,

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to an error which has served its time ; victory is nothing else in the victory of the truth of to-day over the truth of yesterday, which has become the error of the following day.

Thus when two armies meet, there is presented a much greater spectacle than that from which philanthropy turns away her eyes. She sees only thousands of men who are about to cut each other down, that which is surely a great misfortune. But, in the place, death is a phenomenon of universal life, which does take place solely on the field of battle ; and, after all, as it has been said, war changes very little the tables of mortality. And then it is not death which in itself is deplorable, it is unjust death, unjustly given or received. That thousands of hearts which are beating at this moment shall cease to beat, is a mournful fact ; but that a drop of innocent blood may be shed, is a fact much more mournful ; it is an evil, a horrible evil. One innocent person who perishes ought a thousand times more to excite the grief of humanity, than whole armies of heroes who know that they are going to death, and who meet it freely for a cause which is just in their eyes, and which is dear to them. In great battles men are not the objects of contention, but causes ; the op-

elements? It is because at Platea there were at stake neither places nor men, but the cause, and this cause was very great: it was not only the liberty of a few tribes yet half-barbarous, which was staked at Platea, there were engaged the past and the future of the world, the ancient spirit and the new spirit which encountered each other in a bloody manner. Victory remained with the new spirit; behold why the name of Platea is so full of solemn meaning. It was the same in the battle of Arbela: it was not an engagement between the family of Darius and the Macedonian dynasty, for humanity was very little interested in either; but at Arbela (and that was, perhaps, the most important day of antiquity) it was declared that not only the new spirit was able to resist the ancient, as it had been able at Marathon and Platea, but it was demonstrated that the new spirit was stronger than the ancient, that it was in a condition to return its visits, and to make them somewhat longer. In fact, the results of Arbela endured two centuries. Two hundred years after the battle of Arbela, the traces of Alexander, a Greek civilization, an empire entirely Greek, were still in Bactriana and Sogdiana, and upon the banks of the Indus. The same consideration attaches the same interest to Pharsalia. I love, and surely I honor the last of the Brutuses, but he represented the ancient spirit, and the new spirit was on the side of Cæsar; this long strife, which Niebuhr has so well discerned, and described in his Roman history from its origin, between the patricians and plebeians, this strife of several centuries ended at Pharsalia. Cæsar was a Cornelian by family, not by his spirit; he succeeded, not Sylla, but Marius, who succeeded the Gracchi. The new spirit demanded a larger place; it gained it at Pharsalia. That was not the day of Roman liberty, but that of democracy, for democracy and liberty are not synonymous. Every democracy, to endure, requires a master to govern it; that day it took one, the most magnanimous and the wisest, in the person of Cæsar. It is the same with all great battles. I am not able here to give you a course of lectures on battles; take them all one after another; take Poitiers, take Lepanto, take

Lutzen, etc. ; all are celebrated, because in all men were not in question, but ideas ; they interest humanity, because humanity comprehends marvellously well that it is she who is engaged on the field of battle.

The hazards of war and of the diverse fortune of combats are spoken of without cessation ; for my own part, I think there is very little chance in war : the dice are loaded, it seems, for I defy any one to cite me a single game lost by humanity. In reality, there is not a single battle which has taken a turn detrimental to civilization. Civilization may receive some check, arms are inconstant ; but in the end the advantage, the gain, and the honor of the campaign remain to it. Every time that the spirit of the past and the spirit of the future shall find themselves engaged, the advantage will necessarily remain with the new spirit. We have seen that history has its laws : if history has its laws, war, which plays so great a part in history, which represents its great movements, and, thus to speak, its crises, war also ought to have its laws, and its necessary laws ; and if, as we have established it, history, with its great events, is nothing else than the judgment of God upon humanity, we can say that war is nothing else than the pronouncing of this judgment, and that battles are its signal promulgation ; defeats and the end of a nation are the decrees of civilization and of God himself, in regard to this nation, which they declare to be behind the present time, to be in opposition with the progress of the world, and, consequently, to be blotted out from the book of life.

I have proved that war and battles are, first, inevitable ; secondly, beneficial. I have vindicated victory as necessary and useful ; I undertake, nevertheless, to vindicate it as just, in the strictest sense of the word. We usually see in success only a triumph of force, and an honorable sympathy draws us towards the vanquished ; I hope I have shown that, inasmuch as there always must be a vanquished party, and inasmuch as the vanquished party is always that which ought to be vanquished, to accuse the vanquisher and to take part against victory, is to take part

against humanity, and to complain of the progress of civilization. It is necessary to go further, it is necessary to prove that the vanquished party deserved to be vanquished ; that the vanquishing party not only serves the cause of civilization, but that it is better, more moral than the vanquished party. If it were not so, there would be a contradiction between morality and civilization, which is impossible, for both are only two sides of the same idea.

In general, every thing is just in this world ; prosperity and adversity are dealt out as they ought to be. I speak in general terms, and saving the exceptions. Virtue and prosperity, misfortune and vice, are in necessary harmony.\* It is impossible for us not to attach the idea of merit and demerit to the idea of just and unjust. He who has done well, believes and knows that to him is due a recompense proportioned to his merit. The disinterested and dispassionate spectator forms the same judgment. Benedictions are naturally addressed to virtue, maledictions to real or supposed crimes. The necessary harmony between prosperity and virtue, between misfortune and vice, is a belief of the human race which, under one form or another, is manifested in its actions or its words, in its sympathy as in its wrath, in its hopes and in its fears. Without making here a classification of virtues, I am satisfied to remind you that prudence and courage are the two virtues which contain nearly all, and preside over all the others. Prudence is a virtue, and behold why, among other reasons, it is an element of success ; imprudence is a vice, and behold why it scarcely ever succeeds ; courage is a virtue which has a right to the recompense of victory ; feebleness is a vice, therefore it is always punished and beaten. Not only imprudent actions and wicked actions, but the thoughts, the desires, the emotions that are culpable which we nourish, and which we cherish in the interior of the soul, under the reserve that we will

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\* Upon this harmony between virtue and prosperity, and the exceptions in this world, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 20, pp. 306-310, Lecture 23, pp. 353-360, etc.

not let them degenerate into acts ; these desires, these thoughts, these culpable emotions, will have their punishment. There is not an action, a thought, a desire, a sentiment that is vicious, which will not, sooner or later, be punished in its just measure ; on the contrary, every action, every thought, every resolution, every sentiment that is virtuous, every sacrifice, carries with it its own recompense. Such is the law ; it is of iron and of brass,\* it is necessary and universal, it is applied to nations as to individuals. I also profess this maxim, that in general, nations always have that which they merit, like individuals. We may pity nations, but we must not accuse their destiny, for it is their own work. Suppose a generous nation which takes in earnest its ideas, and which, instead of awaiting the day of conflict in an imprudent and culpable security, foreseeing attack, prepares for it long beforehand, by encouraging a warlike spirit, by founding great military institutions, by forming itself to a severe discipline, by preferring to frivolous pleasures those manly and invigorating exercises in which is tempered the character of individuals and nations ; that nation, when it shall appear on the field of battle, will have committed no blunder, all the chances will be on its side. Suppose, in opposition to this nation, an imprudent or wicked enemy, having ideas without doubt, but not having them sufficiently at heart to make for them the sacrifices which their defence or their propagation would demand ; brave, but without a well-formed military establishment and without warlike habits, or with a military organization strong enough in appearance, but without resolution, and without energy. Bring these two nations into conflict : is it not evident that one being better than the other, more provident, wiser, braver, will deserve to conquer, and, in fact, will conquer ? Behold, for example, Constantinople at the thirteenth or fourteenth century ; it was an empire in possession of a civilization sufficiently advanced, a nation which had ideas, and the best of all, religious ideas, which took a lively interest in them, which

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\* See the argument of *Gorgias*, in Cousin's translation of Plato, Vol. 8.

had such a passion for them as to be constantly in public places, to dispute about them without cessation, to come to real *mêlées* on their account. This nation was instructed, learned, ingenious, enthusiastic; but, at the same time, they had energy only for disputation and internal brawls; it knew not how to obey; it had no care of the future, no military spirit, no manly habit, no moral force, no virtue. Hence it will pass, and deserves to pass, under the yoke of conquest. Opposed to it were adversaries which the writers of Byzantium called barbarians, but who were not entirely so; for they had also their ideas, which they cherished, for which they were ready to die; they sought to make conquests for their ideas at the price of their blood, and they accomplished it, they deserved to accomplish it. Thus Constantinople was soon conquered: Europe raised a cry of grief, honorable to Europe, but overwhelming to Constantinople; for, heir of an immense power, if Constantinople had had any virtue, she would have made conquests for it over barbarism. Instead of that, Constantinople disputed, wrangled, subtilized, and she fell; and hers was the lot which she merited: she was no longer worthy of dominion, and dominion was denied her. And it is not necessary to say that, in my admiration for the conquering, I lose all interest for the victims; I do not understand this language. It is necessary to discriminate between a nation that is corrupt, vicious, degraded, unworthy to exist because it is not able to defend its existence, and humanity which advances and can advance only by retrenching its corrupted elements. When we speak of victims, let us understand that the sacrificer whom we accuse, is not the vanquisher, but that which has given the victory to the vanquisher, that is, Providence. It is time that philosophy of history should put beneath its feet the declamations of philanthropy. War is action on a great scale, and action is positive proof of what a nation or an individual is worth. The soul passes altogether with its powers into action. Would you know what a man is worth? See him act; so all the worth of a nation appears on the field of battle.

Give me the military history of a nation, and I pledge myself

to find all the other elements of its history, for each is tied to each, and each is resolved into thought, as principle, and into action, as effect; that is, into metaphysics and into war. Thus, the organization of armies, even mode of warfare, is important to history. You have all read Thucydides. Behold the manner of fighting among the Athenians and the Lacedemonians. Athens and Lacedemon are wholly there. Do you recollect the organization of that small Greek army of thirty thousand men, which, under the conduct of a young man (for young men are almost always the heroes of history), advanced in the East, even beyond Bactriana? It was that redoubtable Macedonian phalanx, the very configuration of which is the symbol of the rapid and powerful expansion of the Greek civilization, and represents all that there was of impetuosity, of celerity, and indomitable ardor in the Greek spirit, and in the spirit of Alexander. The Macedonian phalanx was organized for rapid conquest, to bore through every thing, to overcome every thing. It is made to bring its force to bear on a single point, for attack much more than for defence; it has an impetuous motion, an irresistible movement; it has little internal force, little weight and duration. But direct your attention to the Roman legion: Rome is in it entire. A legion is a great whole, an enormous mass, which, in its movement, crushes every thing in its passage, without any indication of being dissolved, so compact is it, so vast, and so full of resources in itself. At the sight of a legion one feels that he is before an insurmountable power, and at the same time, before an enduring power which sweeps away the enemy, and takes its place, occupies the soil, establishes itself on it, and in it takes root. The Roman legion is a city, is an empire, is a small world which is sufficient for itself; for there was every thing in its organization, cavalry as well as infantry, and infantry with every species of arms. In a word, the legion was an army organized not only for subduing the world, but for guarding it; its character is completeness, weight, duration, fixedness, that is, the spirit of Rome.



I could take also the military institutions of each great nation, and I could show the spirit of this nation in that of its institutions. Every thing is related to the civilization; every thing measures it, every thing in its own manner represents it. Philosophy of history ought, then, to despise nothing. It must consider in a nation all its interior elements, agriculture, commerce, industry, art, religion, the State, philosophy, and it must seize the idea which all of these elements contain and develop; then it must follow this idea in its relations with the other contemporaneous ideas which it attacks, or which attack it, that is, in its military action. Every truly historical nation has an idea to realize; and when it has sufficiently realized it at home, it exports it in some way by war, it causes it to make the tour of the world; every civilization which advances, advances by conquest. Every historical nation is, therefore, for some time, engaged in conquests; then, after having been engaged in conquests, after having entirely displayed itself, after having shown and given to the world all that was in it, after having played its part and fulfilled its destiny, it exhausts itself, it has served its time, it is itself conquered; at that time it quits the stage of the world, and philosophy of history abandons it, because it has become useless to humanity.



## LECTURE X.

## GREAT MEN.

**Recapitulation of the last lecture. Subject of this: Great men.—Their necessity and their proper character.—Great men sum up nations, epochs, entire humanity, universal order.—History of the great man. He is born and dies at the proper time. His sign is success.—Theory of power.—Theory of glory.—Great men considered as individuals in their intentions and personal qualities. Littleness of the greatest men.—What are the epochs, and what are the species most favorable for the development of great men?—Of war and of philosophy.—Struggle of great men. Acquittal of the conqueror.**

**AFTER** having gone from the great epochs of history to the places which are their theatre, and from the places to the nations that inhabit them, we shall now proceed from the nations to the eminent individuals who represent them in history, and who are called great men.

I hope that the last lecture has left upon you the conviction that a nation is not simply a collection, more or less considerable, of individuals accidentally united together by the bond of some preponderating external force. It must be evident to you that a nation is veritably a nation only on condition of expressing an idea, which, entering into all the elements which compose the interior life of this nation, into its language, its religion, its manners, its arts, its laws, its philosophy, gives it a distinct physiognomy. How many millions of men have lived, felt, suffered, acted in the centre of Asia and of Africa, of whom History makes no mention, because, expressing no idea, they could have no meaning, and consequently no interest for history! The historical existence of a nation is entirely in its relation with the idea which it represents. Take away from each of the individuals into which a nation is divided the identity of language, of customs,

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religion, of art, of literature, of ideas, and you take away from them, with the bond which unites them, the basis even upon which they exist, and makes them what they are. The spirit of a nation, the spirit common to all citizens, is what constitutes the country. The country is not simply the soil itself, nor even the soil or such an institution, it is the idea expressed for all, by the institutions, which they inhabit, and the institutions, laws, religion, customs, in which they participate. Patriotism is nothing else than a powerful sympathy of all with all, in the same spirit, in the same order of ideas. Take away this unity of spirit and of ideas, and you destroy both country and patriotism.

When I mean every nation, I mean every veritable nation, every historical nation, is necessarily one in the unity of spirit which causes it to think and to act, every individual that makes a part of that nation participates also in its spirit. An individual who in his own country and in his own country should be simply an individual, should be a monster. But there is not, and there cannot be such a thing as a mere individual, and all men who inhabit the same territory, who are of the same times, who speak the same language, who have the same religion and the same customs, all

of individuality. Too much and too little individuality equally destroy the great man. On the one hand individuality alone is an element of misery and littleness: for particularity, the contingent, the finite, tend continually to dissolve to themselves to destruction. On the other hand, all generality tends to unity, and to absolute unity: it has greatness but it risks destroying itself in a chimerical abstraction. The great man is the harmony of particularity and generality: he is a great man only upon these terms, upon this double condition of representing the general spirit of his nation, and it is by his relation to this generality that he is great, and at the same time of representing this generality, which confers upon him his greatness, in his person, under the form of reality, that is, under a finite and visible form: so that the generality may not overwhelm the particularity, and that the particularity may not dissolve the generality, that the particularity and the generality, the infinite and the finite, may mingle in that measure which is true human greatness.

This measure which constitutes true greatness, constitutes also true beauty. The objects of nature which have a character of generality, universality, immensity, infinity, as mountains, seas, expanse of sky, all these objects have that kind of beauty which is called the sublime.

The character of the sublime is to surpass, or tend to surpass the limits of the imagination and all determinate representation. There is a sort of contradiction between the limited powers of the human imagination and the sublime. When art represents the sublime alone, it darts beyond the finite, and produces only gigantic works, as the pyramids of Egypt, the monuments of India, the primitive monuments of almost every people. In the other extreme of civilization and imagination, do we consider objects which have a very determinate character, and well-defined forms, and does art enter into the details and finite of things? it then sinks into the contracted. Whether it be in practice or in theory, the two extremes of beauty, which are equally wanting in it, are the pretty and the enormous. The sensual school, not

being able to surpass the contingent, the particular, the determinate, the finite, is condemned to the pretty. Idealism, on the contrary, tends continually to the general, to the universal, to the infinite, to the sublime. True beauty consists in the mingling of the finite and the infinite, of the ideal and the real : its distinctive feature is harmony and proportion.\*

In morals it is the same in regard to character. There are individuals who have, so to speak, a general character only, that of their age and of their country, mere echoes of the voice of their times ; they form the crowd, and are, thus to call them, the anonymous beings of the human species. Do not laugh ; they form not the meanest nor the worst part. At the other extreme are the friends of individuality, those people who, in order to reflect once or twice in their lives, in order to seize, for a moment, upon their poor individuality, fasten themselves upon it, cling to it, so to speak, without being able and without wishing to get away from it, bringing every thing to their individual sense, and proudly insurgent against all authority. Authority is not always reason ; nevertheless, all authority, having always something universal, is on that account condemned to a little reason and common sense. The mania of individuality is to cut the knot which binds the individual to common sense by authority. These are the originals of the human species : they form a class apart : they give themselves out as the heroes of independence, and are, in general, men without energy and without character ; they are agitated for a moment without doing any thing, and pass away without leaving any trace in history. The first, to call them by their proper name, are ordinary men, a numerous class, honest, useful. They are excellent soldiers of the spirit of the people ; they form the army of every great cause that finds sufficient captains ; it is with them, and them only, that one can perform great things : they know how to obey. But the

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\* See on the sublime and the beautiful, and on this characteristic of true beauty to express the infinite in the finite, 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 13, 14, and 15, and Vol. 4, Lecture 23, page 534.

others, unsusceptible of discipline, unworthy to command, incapable of obeying, their great aim upon this vast scene of the world is to represent, what? themselves, and nothing more. No one pays any attention to them; for humanity has no time to waste in attending to individuals who are nothing else than individuals. A great man is equally removed from the original and from the ordinary man. He is the nation, and he is himself too; he is the harmony of generality and of individuality, in such a proportion that the generality smothered not the individuality, and that at the same time the individuality destroys not the generality in giving to it a real form. Thus the spirit of his nation and of his times is the stuff of which the great man is made; that is his true pedestal: it is from the height of the spirit, common to all, that he is great and commands all.

Since the spirit of a nation necessarily resolves itself into some great representatives, a nation is found entire in its great men. It is in them alone that history considers it. Open the books of history, you there find proper names alone; and it is impossible that it should be otherwise; for if the masses act only for themselves, they do nothing by themselves; they act by their chiefs, who alone occupy the foreground, and who alone fall under the eye of the spectator and of the historian. Historians are right in occupying themselves with great men; they should, however, take care only to represent them for what they are, that is, not as the masters, but as the representatives of those who do not appear in history; otherwise a great man would be an insult to humanity. Under this restriction, it is certain that, every nation necessarily resolving itself into great men of every kind, the history of a nation should be formed, as it is, by the history of its great men.

But what is a nation? A nation, as we have seen in the last lecture, is one of the ideas of an epoch. As an epoch includes many ideas, it includes, also, many nations. Now what is true of one nation is true of another nation. Besides, what is true of one epoch is true of another, is true of all others; then entire history, no longer that of one nation, nor that of one epoch, but

that of all nations and of all epochs, is represented by great men. Then give me the series of great men, all the great men known, and I will produce for you the known history of the human race.

And what is humanity itself? Humanity is nothing but the last term of universal order. Humanity sums up entire nature and represents it, and great men in their turn sum up and represent humanity. The perpetual movement of things then, in all their momenta, and in all their degrees, is only the production of great men.

Every thing in the whole world labors to form the marvel of a great man. Behold him formed, he arrives upon the scene of history: what does he do? what part does he play, and under what aspect should the history of philosophy regard him? A great man, of whatever kind he may be, in whatever epoch of the world, among whatever people he may appear, comes to represent an idea, such an idea and not any other, so long as that idea has force and is worth the trouble of representing, not before and not after: he appears when he should appear, he disappears when he has nothing more to do, he is born and he dies at the proper time. When there is nothing great to do, the great man is impossible. What, in fact, is a great man? The instrument of a power which is not his own; for all power purely individual is contemptible, and no man yields to another. Where, then, true power, that of the idea, exists not or exists no longer, where it fails or declines, what force will its representative have? You cannot produce the great man before his time, and you cannot make him die before his time; you cannot displace, nor advance him, nor put him back; you cannot continue his existence and replace him, for he existed only because he had his work to do; he exists no longer because there is no longer any thing for him to do, and to continue him is to continue a useless part. It was once said to a soldier who had placed himself upon a throne: "Sire, you must watch attentively over the education of your son; he must be brought up with the utmost care, in order to be able to



replace you." "Replace me!" he replied: "I could not replace myself; I am the child of circumstances." This man felt well that the power which animated him was not his own, and that it was lent to him for a definite purpose, up to an hour which he could neither hasten nor put back. It may be said that he was somewhat of a fatalist. Observe that all great men have been more or less fatalists: the error is in the form, not in the basis of the thought. They feel that they are not there on their own account; they have the consciousness of an immense force, and not being able to do themselves credit for it, they refer it to a superior power of which they are but the instruments, and which makes use of them in accordance with its own purposes. And not only are great men somewhat inclined to fatalism, but they have also their superstitions. Bring to mind Wallenstein and his astrologer. Thence it happens, too, that great men, who in action have a decision and an ardor alike admirable, before action hesitate and alumber; the sentiment of the necessity, that is, the evidence of their mission, must strike them; they seem to comprehend confusedly that without that, they would act like individuals, and that they would not have all their power.

Without entering into superfluous details, it follows from the entire history of great men that they have been taken, and that they have taken themselves for the instruments of destiny, for something fatal and irresistible; and the proper character, the sign of a great man is, that he succeeds. Whoever does not succeed is of no use in the world, leaves no great result, and passes away as if he had never been. The great man must succeed, in whatever it may be, in order to perform his work: an activity, an inexhaustible fecundity, brilliant and prolonged success, such are his necessary characteristics. But great men are not only artists, or philosophers, or legislators, or pontiffs; they are also, as we have before seen, warriors. The great warrior is such, is historical, only on condition of obtaining great success, that is, of gaining great battles; that is, farther, and it must be confessed, of making frightful ravages upon the earth. But either no warrior

should be called a great man, or, if he is great, he must be vindicated, and the footstool of his greatness accepted.

The result of great success is power, and great power. But when one has arrived at that, when one has mounted so high, he may lose his head, he may believe himself, and may even appear to be, above the rest of men ; he has a court, and flatterers, and slaves. Certainly such a man seems the master of the world, before whom the world is on its knees ; such a man is only an instrument, and of whom, I pray ? Of Divine Providence ? Yes, doubtless, in the last analysis, but first and immediately of the ideas which are dominant in his times and in his country ; of the ideas of his nation, and, consequently, of all the individuals of this nation, of the smallest as of the greatest, for all are units in the unity of their country and of their time ; so that the great man is at the end of the account only the servant of those even whom he commands. That is the secret of his power. Never hasten to attribute any thing vile to humanity. Humanity submits not to a foreign force, but to that with which it sympathizes, and which serves it.

It is the fortune of a great man to represent better than any other man of his times the ideas of those times, their interests, their wants. All the individuals composing a nation have the same general ideas, the same interests, the same wants, but without the energy necessary to realize and to satisfy them ; they represent their times and their nation, but in a powerless, unfaithful, obscure manner. But as soon as the true representative shows himself, all recognize in him distinctly what they had confusedly seized upon in themselves ; they recognize the spirit of their times, the spirit even which is in themselves ; they consider the great man as their true image, as their ideal ; and under this title they adore and follow him who is their idol and their chief. As the great man is at foundation nothing else than the nation made a man, the nation does upon this condition sympathize with him ; they have confidence in him, and for him feel love and enthusiasm ; they are devoted to him. This is all the devotion

that you can, that you ought to expect from humanity ; it is not capable and it would not be well that it should be capable of any other ; it serves him who serves it. The principle of the power of a great man is much better than the express consent of humanity, which is very often doubtful and unfaithful ; it is the intimate, spontaneous, irresistible belief that this man is the nation, that he is the country, that he is the epoch.

In the last lecture I defended victory : I now have been defending power ; and it remains to me to defend glory, in order to vindicate humanity. We never attend to the fact that whatever is human, is made so by humanity, were it only in permitting it to exist ; to curse power, I mean a long and durable power, is to blaspheme humanity, and to accuse glory, is simply to accuse humanity that decrees it. What is glory ? The judgment of humanity upon one of its members ; and humanity is always right. Give to me an instance of unmerited glory. How, in short, could error here be possible ? One has glory only on condition of having done much, of having left great results. Great results, great results ! every thing else is nothing. Let glory be well distinguished from reputation. Whoever wishes reputation may have it. Do you wish reputation ? ask such or such a one of your friends to make it for you ; associate yourself with such or such a party ; devote yourself to a coterie ; serve it, and it will praise you. There are a thousand ways of acquiring a reputation : it is an enterprise just like any other, it does not even suppose a great ambition. What distinguishes reputation from glory is, that reputation is the judgment of a few, while glory is the judgment of a great number. In order to please a small number, small things suffice ; in order to please the masses, great ones are necessary. With the masses, deeds are every thing, all else is nothing. Intentions, good-will, the most beautiful plans which could not have failed to result in good, had it not been for this or that reason, all that does not resolve itself into fact, is counted for nothing by humanity ; it wishes great results, for great results alone reach it : now, in regard to great results, there

can be no possible trickery. The falsehoods of parties and coteries, the illusions of friendship can accomplish nothing; discussion itself is out of the question. Great results cannot be contested, and glory, which is their expression, can none the more be contested. The daughter of great and evident facts, she is herself a fact, as clear as the day. Glory has never been enfeebled, and never can be; we may appeal from coteries and parties to humanity; but from humanity, to whom in this world can appeal be made? Glory is the cry of sympathy and of gratitude; it is the debt of humanity towards genius; it is the price of the services of which it acknowledges the receipt, and for which it pays with what is most precious, its esteem. Glory, then, should be loved, because it is loving great things, great labors, services efficiently rendered to the country and to humanity. We should despise reputation, the success of a day and the trifling means that lead to it. We should think of doing, doing much, doing well, of being and not appearing; for it is an infallible rule, that all which appears without being, soon disappears; but all which exists, by virtue of its nature, sooner or later must appear. Glory is almost always contemporaneous; but there is never a long interval between the tomb of a great man and glory.

A great man is great, and he is a man; what makes him great is his relation to the spirit of his times, and to his people; what makes him a man is his individuality; but separate these two elements, consider the man in the great man, and the greatest of men appears small enough. Every individuality, when it is detached from the general spirit which it expresses, is full of what is pitiful. When we read the secret memoirs which we have of some great men, and when we follow them into the details of their life and conduct, we are always quite confounded to find them not only small, but, I am compelled to say, often vicious and almost despicable. Let us consider first individual intentions. What does the great man accomplish? the designs of the superior power which acts in him and by him. This is what he does; but very frequently he knows nothing of it, and has his own par-

ticular designs. It is curious to search out in history what were the intentions of such and such a great man : they are sometimes intentions mean enough, and at the distance of ten years we are ashamed that such geniuses should have pursued such vulgar aims. Henry IV., it is said, wished to make war upon Austria, and to go to Brussels for a cause little enough heroic. I am not very sure that Gustavus Adolphus had not the idea of creating a petty principality in Germany. And, for example, I ask you if there is any thing at the present time more ridiculous than the apparent motive that has moved during eight or ten years our own Europe, and stirred up the great wars of which we have been the witnesses ? You have, perhaps, already forgotten it : I mean the Continental Blockade. Here it is that the spectacle of the miseries of individuality present themselves. But it was only the external covering of designs otherwise great. These, of which no one thought, have been accomplished, and could not but be accomplished, for they were the designs of Providence : the others not only have failed of accomplishment, but after having made much noise, they have fallen into oblivion, and have degenerated into uncertain anecdotes which ordinary history may collect, but which the history of philosophy neglects as indifferent to humanity. It is the same with regard to the particular qualities of great men. As they represent the fair side of their time, so also do they represent the contrary. Alexander is said to have had base defects, and so had Cæsar ; notwithstanding, there never existed greater men. All great men, closely examined, remind us of the saying—"There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous." Once more, there are two parts in a great man—the part of the great man and the part of the man. The first alone belongs to history ; the second should be abandoned to memoirs and biography ; it is the vulgar part of these great destinies, it is the ridiculous and comic part of the majestic drama of history. The romantic drama takes man as a whole, not only on his ideal side, but on his individual side ; hence scenes the most burlesque and most comic succeed scenes

the most heroic and most pathetic, and heighten their effect. This is all very well, but history should be a classic drama ; it should bring together all the details and individual traits into a unity ; it should place in a clear light the idea which a great man represents. The philosophy of history does not know individuals who are simply individuals ; it omits, it ignores the purely individual and biographical side of man, for this very simple reason, that this is not what humanity has seen in him ; that it has not adored him nor followed him on account of this, but notwithstanding this. The fundamental rule of the philosophy of history in regard to great men is to do as humanity does, to judge them by what they have done, not by what they have wished to do (which possesses not the least interest, because it has not been done) ; to neglect the description of weaknesses inherent in their individuality and which have perished with it, and to fasten itself upon the great things which they have done, which have served humanity, and which still endure in the memory of men ; in short, to search out and establish what constitutes them historical personages, what has given them power and glory, namely, the idea which they represent, and their intimate relation with the spirit of their times and of their nation.

Two questions may still be agitated in regard to great men, and this is the first : Are the different epochs of history equally favorable to the development of great men ?

Let us suppose an epoch of the world in which the dominant idea was neither that of the finite, nor that of the relation of the finite to the infinite, but that of the infinite, of the absolute, of generality in itself ; for all these categories of thought must have their representation in history ; it was then necessary, under pain of a fundamental vacancy, that this idea should have its realization and its epoch ; and, in short, it has had it. What then happened ? That which should have happened. There, where the idea of generality reigned alone, individuality had not its rights, liberty was wanting to humanity ; consequently, man was nothing, or scarcely any thing. Ages flowed away in silence with-

out leaving any traces, the masses remained in a state of masses, sometimes palsied, sometimes vainly agitated, ignorant of themselves and ignorant of others; for nations recognize the hidden powers slumbering in them only in their great representatives, and they appear in history only through the medium of their great men. Now I ask—What great man has appeared in the vast countries comprised between the country of the Samoides and the Gulf of the Ganges, between the mountains of Persia and the sea-shore of China? Certainly the space is vast in length and in breadth. Immense masses of people are there, people more or less civilized, who have done, if not great, at least enormous things, if one may so express it. They have had wars, compared with which ours are but mere battles; the monuments of art are there gigantic. Unquestionably the highest antiquity is there. All this is true, still not a proper name survives; not one great historical personage there appears of any sort. It may be replied that we know not the great men that have appeared in Central Asia and in India, because India has no history; but I will ask—Why has it no history? It is because, as I have already shown you, that when man does not regard himself seriously, and has no importance in his own eyes, he takes no note of what he does, because what he does scarcely belongs to him, and seems to be done of itself, so that no one can feel either shame or glory. Man, not believing himself worthy of memory, abandons the world to the action of the forces of nature, and history to the gods, who fill it alone. Hence the entire mythological chronology of these ancient countries. The reason why they have no history in India is precisely the reason why they have no great men. But let us descend from those high regions where the infinite and the absolute reign alone in all their overwhelming omnipotence; approach the West; traverse the desert of Indus; arrive in Persia: there the gods give place to man, time succeeds eternity, the individual commences, and with him commences history, an obscure history to be sure, but in short a history, of great men, of heroes, a Cyrus. And when we pass the sea of Othman and arrive in

Arabia, towards the shores of the Red Sea and the coasts of Egypt, there we find also, with a little history, great names and great men, because humanity there played a part more or less considerable; whilst in Central Asia we may literally say that humanity remained anonymous, indifferent to itself, not believing in its freedom, and neither leaving, nor caring to leave, any trace of its passage upon earth. But the epoch which should represent in the world the idea of the finite, of movement, of liberty, of individual activity, is the epoch marked for the development of great men. Thus, when you search after great men, you recur to Greek and Roman antiquity; this is the epoch of history which may be called the heroic age of humanity. The third epoch, which represents the relation of the finite with the infinite, is not less fertile in great men, but it shows them less brilliant, that is, less as individuals than those of Greece and Rome, but more substantial, and, in a manner, more identified with things. Besides, this epoch is of yesterday, and has but just run through its periods of barbarism.

I insist no more, and I pass immediately to the second question: What are the most favorable pursuits for the development of great men? Without abasing industry, it must be acknowledged that its conquests, and those of commerce, are made little by little; each century, each individual lends a hand to it; but the Watts and the Fultons are very rare. Industry marches and advances more to the aid of time than to the aid of man. It is in the arts, in the government of States, it is in the world of religion that all the power of some privileged individuals is revealed. Behold the names left in history by great artists, great legislators, founders of religions; they have known so well how to satisfy and realize in their works the ideas of their nation and their time, that they have often given their name to their age, proof incontestable of the harmony of their age with them, and of their power over their age. Nevertheless, I do not fear to affirm that the two pursuits which offer most to the development of great individualities are war and philosophy.



War is nothing else than the external action of the spirit of a people. When the spirit of a people has penetrated the different elements of which its life is composed, when it has formed and constituted them, it passes beyond them and marches to conquest. It is upon the field of battle that energetic and faithful representatives are necessary, and there they are never wanting. Glory is an unexceptionable witness of the importance of the true greatness of men. Now, what are the greatest glories? In fact, they are those of warriors. Who are those who have left the greatest names among men? Those who have done for them the greatest good and rendered them the greatest services, that is, those who have made the greatest conquests for the ideas which, in their times, were called to empire, and which then represented the destinies of civilization. Besides, war requires in a high degree a powerful individuality; for if the crowd and the soldiers have need only of enthusiasm and discipline, the chief, who presides over the movements of this crowd, must add to the enthusiasm which makes him sympathize with his army, that ever-present reflection which, at each moment, deliberates, resolves, calculates, and decides. Nowhere do the masses identify themselves more visibly with the great man than on the field of battle; but if this identification is more brilliant in the great captain, it is more intimate and more profound in the great philosopher.

First, I appeal for it to glory. There are no greater names than those of certain philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Whoever knows Alexander and Cæsar, knows Plato and Aristotle. The human race, it is true, does not render to itself any account of what these two names represent; but it does not any more account to itself for what is represented by the names of Cæsar and Alexander. The human race employs the first as symbols of political and military genius, and the latter as symbols of philosophic genius. Listen no more to schools than to parties; listen to the human race. To the human race philosophy is, and always will be, Plato and Aristotle. I have cited the greatest philosophers in order to equal Cæsar and Alexander; but it must be observed

that nowhere are there more great men than in philosophy. We may account for this phenomenon. The highest degree of individuality is reflection, which separates us from all that is not ourselves, and puts us in array with ourselves ; at the same time the object of philosophical reflection is what is most general in thought. Reflection has generality for its foundation, and individuality for its form. It is precisely the highest alliance of these two elements which constitutes the great man. Finally, remember that philosophy has been demonstrated to be the highest degree, and the necessary summing up of the development of a nation ; then the great philosopher is himself, in his time and in his country, the ultimate of all other great men ; and, with the great captain, the most complete representative of the nation to which he belongs. The two greatest things in the world are action and thought, the one displayed upon the field of battle, the other in the solitude of the closet. The two greatest modes of serving humanity are, to cause it to advance a step in the road of truth, by elevating the ideas of an age to their highest expression, by carrying them to their utmost metaphysical limits, or by impressing these ideas with the sword upon the face of the world, and by making for them extensive conquests. We may hesitate between the destiny of Aristotle and that of Alexander, between Columbus and Descartes.

You have seen that if the strife of nations is sorrowful, if the vanquished excites our pity, our greatest sympathy must be reserved for the vanquisher, since every victory infallibly draws after it a progress of humanity. The conflict of heroes is, at first sight, not less melancholy than that of nations ; it is sad to see at variance the men who constitute the glory of humanity, and it is difficult to decide between such noble adversaries : unfortunate heroes excite in us an interest even more profound than that produced by nations ; for individuality increases sympathy. But there, again, we must be on the side of the victor, for that is always the side of civilization, the side of the present and of the future, while the side of the conquered is always that of the

t. The great man conquered is a great man out of place in times ; and his defeat must be applauded, since it was just . useful, since, with his great qualities, his virtue and his ius, he marched contrary to humanity and the times. We l also, on reflection, that the conquered was necessarily con- red, and that genius was not equal on both sides. Defeat alone poses that the conquered was deceived in regard to the state of world ; that he wanted sagacity and light, and that he was rt-sighted. An attentive and impartial examination is very avorable to the vanquished. I have not courage to unveil e all the wickedness and all the faults of the last of the tuses. I know them, but there is at the bottom of my heart insuperable tenderness for this man : I should have greater mess in opposing Demosthenes, for, after all, he was only a at orator. Demosthenes in his times represents the past of ece, the spirit of the small cities and small republics, a aocracy worn out and corrupted, a past which could no longer t, and which already existed no longer. To reanimate this t, hopelessly destroyed, a display of force and energy was essary, of which others were incapable, and he as well as all ers ; for, in short, we are always somewhat like others, we ong to our times. So Demosthenes also failed ; I add, with ory, that he failed without greatness ; and it was even inevita- ; for when we place our courage, even though we may have oh of it, in opposition with what is impossible, the sentiment the absurdity of the enterprise, of which we cannot always rid, troubles, disconcerts, casts down, and after having per- ned prodigies in the tribune, we finish by running away at ronea. The eloquence of Demosthenes is somewhat like his : it is incomparable in invective and in argument ; he is nently the vehement orator. But take the discourses of icles somewhat arranged by Thucydides ; compare them with se of Demosthenes, and you will see what difference there is ween the eloquence of the chief of a great nation and that the chief of a party.

The struggle of heroes in war and in politics is not, then, so painful on reflection as at first view. So it is in philosophy. The struggle of great philosophical geniuses, well understood, has nothing in it afflicting, for it results in profit to human reason. Time does not permit me here, as I had intended, to set before you this fruitful struggle; I could have wished to show you here also that the conquered is wrong, since here also the battle is between the past and the future. Philosophers, at variance with each other, present to the world the spectacle of a certain number of particular ideas, true in themselves, but false taken exclusively, which need a momentary dominion in order to develop all that is in them, and at the same time show what is not in them, and what is wanting to them: each serves its time; and after having been useful, it must give place to another whose turn has come. In the combat between two ideas represented by two great philosophers, the struggle, far from afflicting the friends of humanity and philosophy, must, on the contrary, fill them with hope, since it warns them that humanity and philosophy are preparing to take a new step. We must conceive that the perpetual destruction of systems is the life, the movement, the progress, the history even of philosophy. This spectacle, instead of producing skepticism, should inspire a faith without limits in this excellent human reason, in this admirable humanity, for which all men of genius labor, which profits by their errors, their struggles, their defeats, and their victories, which advances only upon its ruins, but which incessantly advances.

## LECTURE XI.

## HISTORIANS OF HUMANITY.

**Subject of the lecture:** Examination of the great historians of the history of humanity.—The idea of a universal history belongs to the XVIII. Century.—Difficulties of universal history. Its laws: 1st, To omit no element of humanity; 2d, To omit no age.—That universal history must have commenced by being exclusive.—That the first exclusive point of view must have been at the commencement of the XVIII. Century the point of religious view. *Universal History* of Bossuet. Its merits, its defects.—Necessity of an exclusive political point of view. *New Science* of Vico. Its merits, its defects.—Necessity of a more comprehensive point of view, of a universal history more complete, but more superficial in each part.—Herder, *Ideas towards a Philosophy of History*. Its merits, its defects.—A word upon Voltaire, Turgot, Condorcet.—State of universal history. Richness of some particular works. Necessity of a new universal history.

I HAVE rapidly designated to you the principal phases under which may be presented the history of humanity, and that of philosophy, which is its perfection. It remains for me to make known to you the manner in which this great subject has been heretofore treated. When one enters upon a career, not merely to shine for a moment upon the route, but to march to the goal and to attain it, if it is possible, it is a duty to search for the traces of those who have gone before, and to look carefully at the ways which they have followed in order to choose those which have conducted them well, and to avoid those which have led them astray. He who, in a science, neglects the history of that science, deprives himself of the experience of ages, places himself in the position of the first inventor, and puts gratuitously against himself the same chances of error; with this difference, that the first errors having been necessary, have been useful, and are more than excusable, while the repetition of the same errors is useless for others and shameful to himself. The science of humanity,

like humanity, ought to be progressive; and there is progress only on two conditions: first, to represent all one's predecessors; then to be one's self, to sum up all anterior labors, and to add to them. Who is sufficiently sure of fulfilling the second condition, to be able to dispense with the first?

The idea of a universal history of humanity is quite recent, and it must necessarily be so. There can be no universal history without some plan; and much time was necessary for humanity to conjecture a plan in the mobility of the events of this world.\* It was necessary that it should see many empires, many religions, many systems appear and disappear, in order to think of comparing them, and in order to ascend to the general laws which preside at their formation and their ruin. It was necessary that it should survive many revolutions, many apparent disorders, in order to comprehend that all these disorders are in effect only apparent, and that above is an invariable and beneficent order. The history of humanity must have belonged to the latest generations; and, in fact, it was the seventeenth century that conceived the first idea of it, it was the eighteenth that extended it, and it has been reserved, perhaps, to the nineteenth to elevate it to the height of a positive science.

Its first attempts were very feeble, and it could not have been otherwise. Think of all the difficulties of a universal history. At first, all the elements of humanity must enter into it, and these elements are diverse and numerous; they are industry, the sciences, the State, art, religion, and philosophy. This is not all: not only a legitimate history of humanity must exclude none of these elements, but it must follow each of them and all together in all their development, that is, in all times. Not one element must be retrenched, for it would then be no longer a complete history of humanity; not one century must be forgotten, for then would be misconceived the particular development of some element, an important one, perhaps, of humanity.

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\* On the idea of a universal history, see 1st Series, Vol. 1st, the fragment entitled: *De la Philosophie de l'Histoire*.

The two laws of a universal history are, then, not to omit any of the fundamental elements of humanity, and not to omit any century. Now, unless here humanity has been more fortunate or more wise than in any thing else, it is almost impossible that it should not have fallen into the error which we have so many times designated, which consists in taking a part for the whole, and the most striking part of things for their universal character; so that if the law of a universal history requires completeness, the fact of all universal histories is to be incomplete and exclusive. All will take the title of universal histories, but each one will be only a partial history; all will pretend to embrace entire humanity, and will reach only some of its elements, will follow its development only in certain centuries. Properly speaking, there is in this no error, it is only incompleteness. A man endowed with common sense in writing the history of his species, may omit some important points, but that to which he adheres cannot lack reality. Before men, when one is himself a man, it would be absurd to attach one's self to a mere chimera. A real element then is taken; but this element, real as it is, is only a particular element; it accounts for a multitude of the phenomena of history; it does not comprehend them all. Thus incomplete as all histories will be, they will not for all that be false; only they will contain but a part of the truth.

This is not all. If it be good that a nation express a single idea, in order to bring to light all that is in it, and all that is wanting to it, it is good also that a superior mind preoccupy itself with one particular element of humanity, and sacrifice to it all the others, in order that this at least may be well known. This partial history, under its universal title, puts you in possession of the entire development of a real and particular element. If each pretended universal history render you the same service in regard to the other elements of humanity, each is useful; and instead of proscribing all those histories that are styled universal, and that are incomplete, we should borrow from each of them what it contains, and complete them in reuniting them. To despise nothing,

to profit by every thing, to avoid exclusiveness in ourselves, but to comprehend and forgive it in others, to aim at the universal and complete, and to aim at them by the points of view the most incomplete of our predecessors and our masters, reconciled and united, you know it well—such is our end, such is our method in history, as in philosophy, as in all things.

It is, then, admitted that all pretended universal histories will commence by being incomplete, and will give at first the history of a single real element of humanity. Let us discover now what is the element of nature that first strikes and preoccupies the attention, that is, what is the first error and the first truth that must have presented itself to the science of history.

Philosophy is the tracing back of all that exists to its ultimate law, to the highest formula of abstraction and of reflection. Philosophy is the last development of humanity, the most clear in itself, but the most obscure in appearance. It is, then, impossible that the historian, in the first look which he casts upon humanity, should perceive philosophy alone. This is an error which we have not to fear. As one cannot begin by the history of that which is the highest, to wit, philosophy, so one cannot begin by the history of that which is most common, to wit, industry, commerce, and all that depends upon it. It is manifest that there are things more important than that. This, then, is an error that we have not to fear at the commencement of history. The arts, without doubt, form the charm of life, but evidently they are not its substance; evidently, in history, they always show themselves in the train of the State or of religion.

Religion occupies a considerable place in the world. It takes us at our birth, marks us with its seal, watches over and governs our infancy and our youth, intervenes in all the great moments of life, and surrounds our last hour with consolations and hopes. One cannot be born, cannot live, cannot die without it. It is found everywhere; the earth is covered with its monuments; it is impossible to withdraw ourselves from its spectacles and its influence. And it has always been so, more or less, during all



the epochs of human society. Religion could not fail to strike the attention ; it is, then, impossible that historians should not, at once, have granted it a wide place ; and as it is in the nature of every element to which a wide place is granted to make of it one still greater, we may rest assured that the religious point of view, already so vast and so important in itself, will have commenced by absorbing all the others, and by making itself the centre of the history of humanity. Finally, let us not forget that the idea of the history of humanity dates from the seventeenth century. Now the seventeenth century is still bound, on more than one side, to the middle age. We are the children of the middle age. And the middle age is nothing else than the establishment and the development of Christianity. Thus an historian, having arrived at the end of the seventeenth century or beginning of the eighteenth, could not avoid seeing religion everywhere, and transferring it everywhere. The first historian of humanity must, then, have considered it from the height of Christianity, given to it Christianity for a centre, for measure, and for aim. It follows that he must have sacrificed all other elements, or subjected them to that ; and it also follows that, among the centuries, the attention of the historian must have been particularly arrested by those centuries which Christianity fills or borders upon. Finally, as all things produce representatives conformable to themselves, the theological point of view in the history of humanity must have had for representative and for organ a theologian and a priest. Hence the necessity of Bossuet.

Consider how favorable Christianity is to a general history of humanity. Christianity is the sum and substance of all religions that have appeared upon the earth ; it is the best of religions for many reasons, without doubt, which belong neither to my subject, nor to this chair, but among others, for this reason, that it came the last. Now it would be strange that the religion last arrived should not be the most perfect. Christianity is connected with all religions and all ages. It occupies all the middle age. Its struggles and its successive victories fill all the last centuries of

#### HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

ic antiquity. Its cradle is on the limits of Asia, of Africa, of Europe. The Mosaic religion, by its developments, is mingled with the history of all the surrounding people of Egypt, of Syria, of Persia, of Greece, and of Rome; while, by its origin, it goes even to the roots of the human race. Christianity comprehends, then, really, almost all the history of humanity. When one seeks only a single thing in the history of the world, not one so comprehensive can be found than that whose first monument is in Genesis, and whose last work is modern society. And this is not only the hidden virtue of Christianity, it is its positive teaching. The Church teaches that this world was made for God; that man exists entirely in his relation to God, in religion; that true religion is Christianity; that, consequently, the history of humanity is, and can only be, the history of Christianity, the history of its origin, of its preparations, of its progress, of its triumph, of its development. This is what the Church teaches; in every yes, every thing refers to Christianity. Individuals to it are not seen, as individuals; it perceives them only inasmuch as they are served or opposed Christianity; this is precisely the true history of individuals in history. The Church teaches, moreover, that individuals have importance only by their relation to Christianity.

of the talent to interpret it is found to be in perfect harmony with the point of view to be represented. Does it not show, in short, that the conception of a universal history in which empires, nations have importance only as instruments of the divine plan of God, was made expressly for the genius of Bossuet, of this man accustomed to regard the grandeur of this world of so little consequence, accustomed to speak at the tomb of beauty, of glory, to celebrate all the noble dead, to find everywhere only misery, except in the designs of Divine Providence? The execution also answers admirably to the conception. This proud manner of treating heroes and empires, this march towards the destined aim, through all that which excites and distracts ordinary historians; this style as lofty and simple as the thought which it expresses, this is what is admired in Bossuet, and not the general plan, which does not cling to him.

As to the faults of the *Universal History*, they are now evident, and shall not insist upon them. In the first place, Bossuet saw here but one element—religion; but one people—the Jewish people. The Arabian race from whom the Jewish people is, without doubt, a great race: it has greatly revolutionized the earth; it produced Moses, who, notwithstanding his greatness, still survives; it has given Christianity to Europe, and recently, to Asia, Mahomet and the powerful Mussulman empire; these are not mean presents. But however firm, and great, however energetic may be this race, it stands not at the head of the world; and as the time has come to refer religion to humanity, the time has also come to substitute humanity for the Jewish people; the framework of Bossuet still subsists; it merely to enlarge it. Bossuet has kept scarcely any account of the East. Nevertheless, before the time in which the people of the East took an historical character, there were behind the Arabian, and beyond Persia, countries ten times more vast than of which Judea had not any idea, and was ignorant even of the name. Central Asia, with its powerful and original civiliza-

zation, was unknown to the Mosaic religion, and a stranger to it. It had its independent development. The roots of the Mosaic religion are old and deep, but they do not penetrate the entire earth. In short, it is useless to speak of the extreme weakness of the details of the *Universal History*: not only the entire East is wanting, as well the history of arts, of industry, and of philosophy; but religions themselves, and political institutions, are treated in a superficial manner, although here and there, as, for example, in Roman history, there are flashes of superior sagacity.

Such is the universal history which France can claim the honor of having given to Europe, as the necessary commencement of a true history of humanity; it was the first step of the genius of history, it could not be the last. Religion plays an important part in our life and in society, but there are other things besides it. The principal place belongs to law, to the State. Acts the most common, as well as the most elevated, are performed under the direction and control of law. You do not contract, you do not trade, you cannot make the smallest transaction without the intervention of law. Your moral activity, however so little it may pass beyond the limits of consciousness, and manifest itself by acts, encounters the State, which judges it and cites it before its tribunal. You may cultivate the sentiment of the beautiful, and arts for yourselves, but it is difficult for you to give to your studies any development, without giving them publicity, uniting them in some way or other to social life, and falling under some law. Religion itself takes the form of acts, which require the protection of law. Public and judicial life is the theatre upon which all the developments of humanity meet, whatever may be their principle and their end. It follows from that, that as it was impossible not to be struck by the part acted by religion in life and in history, it was equally impossible not to be struck by the part acted by laws, political institutions, and governments. Add that every important element tending to become exclusive, the political point of view must have become exclusive in its turn, and each point of view calling forth a representative conformable to itself,

the theological point of view had for its representative a bishop, the political point of view must have had as representative a great jurisconsult. Hence the necessity of Vico.

The *New Science* is the model, and perhaps the source of the *spirit of the Laws*. It brings back particular institutions to their most general principles, ascribes the changes of human society to a superior and invariable plan which regulates the future as well as the past, and converts the conjectures and probabilities of erudition and politics into a true science, the basis of which is the *common nature of nations*. The distinctive feature of the *New Science* is the introduction of a human point of view in the history of humanity. In fact, jurisprudence has in vain styled itself *Scientia rerum humanorum et divinarum*, the science of human and divine things; it is, above all, the science of human things in which it contemplates divine things. Religion, according to Vico, makes part of the State and of society; while, according to Bossuet, it is the State that makes part of religion. Religion, according to Vico, is related to humanity; while, according to Bossuet, it is humanity which is at the service of religion. The point of view has completely changed, and this was an immense step in the science of history, the ultimate aim of which is to make every thing re-enter into humanity, to refer every thing to humanity in this world, except afterwards to refer the destinies of humanity and this world itself to something higher. Besides, according to Bossuet, history has its general plan, but each part is superficially treated; on the contrary, in Vico, different nations have their history thoroughly examined. According to Vico, the existence of people forms a circle, every point of which he has determined with precision. In every people there is always, and there is necessarily, three degrees, three epochs. The first is the epoch of development, improperly called barbarism, in which religion governs, in which the actors and the legislators, thus to speak, are gods, that is, priests; it is the divine age of each people. The second is the substitution of the heroic principle for the theological principle; the divine is still there, but there is also something hu-

man, and the hero is, thus to speak, in history as in the Greek mythology, the medium between heaven and earth. Finally, in the third age, man proceeds from the hero as the hero proceeds from the god, and civil society arrives at its independent form. That done, man, after being completely developed, wastes away; the nation ends; a new nation recommences with the same nature, and runs through the same circle. These are the necessary recurrences of these three degrees that Vico has consecrated under the remarkable name of the *recurrences* of history, *ricorsi*. Thus there is a common nature in nations; and the same nature subjected to the same laws, brings back the same phenomena in the same order. It must not be forgotten that Vico is the first who took away from certain illustrious names their personal grandeur to render it to humanity. Vico first demonstrated that Orpheus and Homer should be considered, not as simple individuals, but as representatives of their epoch, as symbols of their age; and that, if they had really existed, to them would have been attributed, or to their works would have been added, all those of the age and people whom they represent in history. He, too, first discussed the primitive times and fundamental laws of Rome, and indicated to modern criticism some of its finest points of view. Such are the merits of Vico; they justify his high renown.

The fundamental error of the *New Science* is the preponderance of the political element, and the almost entire omission of art and philosophy. It was natural, also, that he who, among the elements of history, had seen, above all, the political element, should have considered, above all, the epochs in which this element played an important part, and should have neglected that which religion governs, to wit, the Oriental epoch. The *New Science* has another fault. Doubtless each nation has its plan, and runs a circle, the circle which Vico has described; each nation has its point of departure, its middle, its end, that is, its history; but has not humanity its history also? Plunged in the *ricorsi*, in the recurrences of the same epochs in each people, Vico forgets to search out what becomes of humanity itself from

succession to recurrence. It is not enough to repeat that humanity advances; it must be told in what manner it advances. To speak of a progress without determining its mode and its law is to say nothing. In general, profound in the history of each people, and in the common nature of nations, to use his own language, Vico is feeble in the progressive development of humanity, and in the determination of the laws which preside over this development.

These are the two great works by which is opened the science of history to the eighteenth century. They are equally true and equally incomplete. After having served the human mind, they could not satisfy it, and they called for a point of view still more elevated, still more vast, which should comprise the two points of view of religion and of the State, with the other elements which Herder and Vico had sacrificed. Hence the necessity of Herder. The fundamental idea of Herder is precisely to give an account of all the elements of humanity, as well as of all times. It is this which gives to his book an incontestable superiority over those of his two illustrious predecessors. Races, languages, religions, arts, governments, philosophical systems, all have place in the history of humanity such as Herder has conceived it. He not only presents the history of these different elements in the epochs the most known of civilization, as Greece, Rome, the middle age, but he has pursued it even into the Eastern world, in this world little known in the times of Herder, and in which he has made the first steps. But his principal honor is to have shown that all the elements of humanity are developed harmoniously, and even progressively. The work of Herder is the first great monument erected to the idea of the perpetual progress of humanity in all directions. I add that among the different parts of which this work is composed, those which in each people are related to the arts and literature are treated with a master hand. It is there that for the first time primitive poetry has been well explained, above all Hebrew poetry and that of the middle age; it is there that for the first time poetry has been put in its true place,

and that it has been proved that popular songs are monuments as faithful as they are touching of the history of nations. I will not forget among the merits of Herder that of having granted the highest importance to the theatre of history. Herder, after Montesquieu, has recognized that in this world man could not withdraw himself from the influence of climates and places, and physical geography has for the first time played, thanks to him, a great part in history. These are brilliant titles, which grave defects even cannot obscure.

The greatest defect of Herder is to have entered upon history with a philosophical system too little favorable to the power and liberty of man. Herder is the pupil of the philosophy which ruled in his times, the philosophy of Locke; he has put the brilliant colors of his genius upon this philosophy, a little dull in itself; he has lent his personal enthusiasm to ideas which seemed scarcely susceptible of it. He saw very well the intimate relations which bind man to nature, but he regarded man too much as the child and passive scholar of nature. He has not made enough of his activity; and when the suggestions of sensibility and of imagination do not seem to explain to him easily certain developments of civilization, instead of referring them to the energy of the human mind, Herder has recourse to mystical explanations in contradiction to the general theory and spirit of his work. Thus for having made man too passive and almost exclusively sensuous, he does not know how to resolve the problem of languages; and like Rousseau, and afterwards M. de Bonald, he resolves it by the *deus machina*.\* The institution of language, according to Herder, is a divine institution; it is an absurdity in a work where every thing is humanly explained. If God here specially intervenes, it is necessary to make him intervene elsewhere, and the fundamental idea of the book is destroyed.

As a second defect, I remark again, that if the arts and litera-

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\* See on this question of the institution of language, First Series, Vol. 1, p. 865, *du Langage*; Vol. 2, Lectures 21, 22, p. 844; Vol. 3, p. 96; Vol. 4, Lecture 21, p. 885.



we are in general admirably treated in Herder, there are other parts very feebly treated. But it is just to remember that at this epoch these parts had been treated nowhere in a profound manner, and that all universal history is on each point necessarily below special histories. In short, the last defect with which I shall reproach Herder, is the want of precision, and a certain character of indetermination and vagueness which injures the impression of his great qualities. Herder admits a continual progress in humanity, but he determines badly their general laws, and in none the particular laws. The result is, that the colors of the work are very brilliant, but there is more brilliancy than light. It is natural enough that Herder, more a literary man than a philosopher, in the midst of the elegant society of Weimar, should have labored somewhat for the men of the world; he has therefore added philosophical formulas, and has been much praised for it; but in such a matter his object should not have been to please, but to instruct and to enlighten. Now, philosophical formulas are the most lucid expression of history, since it is on this condition only (I do not here speak of arbitrary formulas, but of those which are the laws themselves of the human mind) that the human mind can comprehend itself, its works, and its history.

It would be unjust not to say a word of some works, less important, but still very remarkable, that have appeared in France during the eighteenth century, by the side of that of Herder, either a little before or a little after. Voltaire has the merit of having introduced into history *the manners of nations*. The glory of Voltaire is in giving the sentiment of humanity;\* but this sentiment misdirected into a criticism without exactness and without depth, degenerates even into declamations which are not worth much in tragedies, but which are absolutely worth nothing in history, where passion and sentiment ought to give place to intelligence. Besides, when he is so violently excited against what has so long governed the

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\* On Voltaire, see 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 1, p. 38, and Lecture 2, p. 40; see also in this 2d Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 1, and Vol. 3, Lecture 13.

human species, one accuses, at bottom, humanity; for religion does not establish itself nor sustain itself alone; it must find some consent among men. It is true that at the end of its existence it may sometimes try to do without it; but at first it could be established only by it, and not only by the consent, but by the approbation, by the confidence, in a word, by the sympathy of the masses with the laws which were announced to them.

I place in the first rank of the writings of this epoch upon this great subject, that of a young man who was then studying at the Sorbonne, and there composed two discourses in Latin upon the history of humanity in its relations with the history of Christianity and that of the Church. There are more philosophical ideas in these two discourses than in all the works of Voltaire; and if business had not withdrawn him from history and philosophy, I doubt not that the young Sorbonnist would have been ranked by the side of Montesquieu. It is evident that I am speaking of Turgot.\* Condorcet, the friend and disciple of Voltaire and of Turgot, has deposited something of the character of his two masters in the interesting work which, on the eve of perishing, he left to posterity. This work breathes a sentiment of humanity which animates and colors each page, and demands a little excuse for the declamations which were then the fashion. Nevertheless, I cannot help regretting that the *Esquisse* of Condorcet is placed too early in the hands of youth; it is for them a very improper nourishment. What is needed by young people are books learned and profound, even a little difficult to be understood, in order that they may thus serve an apprenticeship to labor and to life; but it is really a pity to distribute to them under the most reduced and lightest form, ideas without substance, which may persuade them that they know something of humanity and of the world. Strong men are manufactured by strong studies; the young men who among you feel the importance of the future,

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\* On Turgot, see 1st Series, Vol. 1, Lecture 17, p. 147; Vol. 2, Lectures 4 and 5, p. 208; Vol. 4, Lecture 16, p. 201; and in this same Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 18.

ght to leave to children and to women small books and elegant  
 fles: it is only by the manly exercise of thought that the youth  
 France can rise to the high destinies of the nineteenth century.  
 explain myself thus so much the more willingly, as I am pleased  
 recognise in the work of Condorcet, as in that of Voltaire, a  
 sentiment of humanity. Besides, all that is good, all that has  
 been most boasted of in the *Esquisse* of Condorcet is found in  
 order, and the sentiment of humanity, and the idea of continual  
 progress, and that ardent love of civilization which Herder carries  
 on to enthusiasm; in Vico the enthusiasm is not in the form,  
 but it is in the depth. These are the works that I recom-  
 mend to my young auditors; they will not study them without  
 attracting a more enlightened love of all that is beautiful and of  
 all that is good: and I congratulate myself upon having encour-  
 aged my two young friends, MM. Michelet and Quinet, to give to  
 France Vico and Herder.

It remains to the nineteenth century to raise a new monument  
 which may be superior to that of Herder, by all the superiority  
 of a new age over an age that is no more. The ways are prepared  
 for a new philosophy of history, which, avoiding the exclusive points  
 of view of Bossuet and Vico, and faithful to the spirit of universality  
 of Herder, may examine more closely what Herder has lightly  
 glanced over, and may substitute for vagueness and indecision of  
 sense, a precision and a rigor truly scientific. But in waiting that  
 the accumulated efforts of learned Europe may produce such a  
 work, after that of Herder, the only thing has been done that  
 could be done: his work has been decomposed, the better to re-  
 compose it at some future day. Its success has been immense;  
 from its first appearance men have been struck with the general  
 sense which it contained, and the manner in which some parts  
 were treated; further progress in the road which he has traced  
 it has been undertaken; deep study of each of the elements of  
 humanity, and of each of the great epochs, has been entered upon;  
 now, where criticism, enlightened by the labors of the last forty  
 years, places itself in the presence of the work which inspired

them, it feels no longer the first enthusiasm (which is impossible unless science has advanced), and in its severity approaches almost to injustice. Since Herder, thank God, every thing has marched forward, whilst Herder has remained in the same place. As for the history of religions, for example, without speaking of the small masterpiece of Lessing, entitled *Education of the Human Race*, the *Symbolism* of Creuzer, which a worthy pupil of the Normal school has given to France, has left far behind, in spite of all its defects, the light sketches of Herder. Winckelman and M. Quatremère de Quincy, have easily surpassed him in regard to what related to the arts of Greece. MM. de Schlegel, whom Herder has perhaps produced, have penetrated much further into Roman, Greek, and Oriental literature. Heeren, in his researches into the commercial relations of ancient nations, has shed new light upon this important and obscure part of the history of humanity. In short, since Herder, the knowledge of philosophical systems has been renewed. But it would have been extreme injustice to demand of him, who is the father of all these works, the depth of knowledge which his predecessors have carried into their special studies. There will be something superficial, or at least insufficient, in all universal histories, as it is the fate of particular histories not always to join to solidity of criticism and erudition speculative views which embrace a vast horizon.

Such is the state of historical science in Europe. Solid works have been undertaken and accomplished upon each subject, upon each epoch; it now remains to unite them and to form of them a great whole, which may join exactness of details and extent of general ideas; which after having been, like the work of Herder, the summary and measure of human knowledge at the moment of its appearance, becomes in its turn a point of departure for new decomposition and for new special researches, still more exact and more profound than the preceding, which shall prepare a new summary, a new universal history, and thus always continue to the profit of humanity and of science. As for myself, without turning my eyes from the general history of humanity, I shall en-

deavor, above all, to treat with care, and in detail, the special branch of the history of humanity which is confided to me, the history of philosophy: and to finish this introduction, I shall devote the next lecture to rendering you an account of the most important works of which, for a century, the history of philosophy has been the subject.



## LECTURE XII.

## OF THE HISTORIANS OF PHILOSOPHY.

**Subject of the lecture:** of the great historians of philosophy.—**Conditions of a great development of the history of philosophy:** 1st, A great development of philosophy itself; 2d, A great development of erudition.—**The first movement of modern philosophy was Cartesianism;** Cartesianism ought to have produced, and has produced, a history of philosophy which represents it.—**Brucker.** His general character: his merits and his defects.—**The second movement of modern philosophy is the struggle of sensualism and idealism at the close of the eighteenth century.** Hence two histories of philosophy in opposite directions: Tiedemann and Tennemann. Their general character. Their merits and their defects.

**It, in the individual, reflection is the faculty which comes last into exercise, and if, in a people and in an epoch, the philosophy which represents reflection is developed after all the other elements of this people and of this epoch, and if the thorough culture of history in general date from the eighteenth century, we must conclude that the history of philosophy, which follows in the train of the history of the other branches of civilization, must have had its place only in the eighteenth century.** The eighteenth century possesses, for its distinguishing character among other centuries, the sentiment of humanity. It was to the eighteenth century that, for the first time, in a dignified manner, humanity began to be interested in itself.\* It would then have been wanting to itself, if it had neglected the study and history of what is most important in itself—the history of reflection, of reason, of philosophy. But besides this general motive, special causes, more active and more fruitful, developed, in the eighteenth century, the history of philosophy.

Search out, I pray you, upon what condition one may occupy

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\* On this character of the eighteenth century, see 1st lecture of the following volume, which presents a complete sketch of the eighteenth century in all parts of Europe, as in all branches of human knowledge.

himself seriously with the history of any science whatever : it is on condition that he is very much interested in it. Suppose a science to be decried, and almost totally neglected ; certainly one must possess excessive curiosity to devote himself to such a science. Observe that history is not an easy thing, that it exacts long and painful labors, in which one cannot engage without a powerful motive ; and this motive can be only the lively interest with which science inspires us. This science must also be much studied and well known, otherwise nothing will be understood of its history. Place before a man who has never cultivated mathematics the work of Euclid ; at first he will not be interested in it ; then he will not be able to comprehend it. This is evident in regard to mathematics ; it is not less true in regard to the moral sciences—jurisprudence, legislation, political history in general. How can he, who is not familiar with the ideas upon which the moral sciences turn, who has not meditated upon the problems which they contain, how can he comprehend the solutions which are given of them in different ages ? With philosophy it is the same, and with greater reason, too. It would be very strange if any one should understand the books of philosophers without having studied philosophical questions. Here, especially, historic intelligence is in direct ratio with scientific intelligence. In every epoch, then, in which philosophy itself shall not have excited a great interest, and shall not have been cultivated, it follows that the history of philosophy will have been little attended to, and not comprehended. On the contrary, suppose an epoch in which philosophy flourishes ; then also the history of philosophy will flourish. A great philosophical movement is then the indispensable condition, and at the same time the certain principle of an equal movement in the history of philosophy. Every great speculative movement contains in itself, and sooner or later produces necessarily, its history of philosophy, and even a history of philosophy which is conformed to it ; for it is only under the point of view of our own ideas that we represent to ourselves the ideas of others. Let us apply this to the eighteenth century.



That we may know whether in the eighteenth century there could have been any great histories of philosophy, and what must have been the character of these different histories, we must examine whether the eighteenth century has produced a great philosophical movement, and what was the character of this movement. Now, the eighteenth century gave a great impulse to philosophy; the history of philosophy then must have exhibited a great development: and the eighteenth century having produced very different philosophical schools, the eighteenth century must have also had very different histories of philosophy. We may at will study the different histories of philosophy in the different schools which must have produced them, as we study effects in their causes; or, in the same manner as we study causes in their effects, we may follow the philosophic schools in their last results, in their histories of philosophy. Thus, in order to study and characterize the different histories of philosophy which the eighteenth century has produced, it is above all necessary that we should cast a glance upon the philosophic schools of the eighteenth century.

Modern philosophy is at the same time the daughter and the adversary of the philosophy of the middle age. The character of the philosophy of the middle age is submission to authority other than that of reason. Modern philosophy recognizes no other authority than that of reason. It is Cartesianism which has accomplished this decisive revolution. In every philosophy it is necessary to search out three things: 1st, The general character of that philosophy; 2d, Its positive method; 3d, Its results, or the system in which the application of this method ends. The character of the philosophy of Descartes is independence; his method is psychology, the account which we render to ourselves of what passes in the soul, in the consciousness, which is the visible scene of the soul. I can know nothing, not even that I exist, unless I think; the study of thought, then, is the only legitimate point of departure in the study of human knowledge. We are all the children of Descartes, for this double reason,

that the philosophical authority which we all accept is reason, and that the point of departure of all philosophical study is for us the analysis of consciousness, of that consciousness which each of us carries with himself, which is the book constantly opened before our eyes, and of which a healthy philosophy must be only a development and a commentary. The psychological method was given to the world by Descartes, and it will never abandon modern philosophy unless modern philosophy consent to abandon itself. But do not forget that every new method is feeble; do not forget that a revolution does not at once arrive at all its consequences. It was so with the Cartesian revolution; it had its beginnings, and did not immediately reveal its end. I am, certainly, far from thinking that there were not, in the ontological results of the Cartesian philosophy, points of view admirable and eternally true; but it cannot be denied that on several points the method of Descartes, that method so firm, totters and sometimes reels. His successors, especially, have more than once had recourse to hypotheses. It is sufficient to call to mind the *God-vision* of Malebranche, and the pre-established harmony of Leibnitz. These are the first fruits of Cartesianism. Think, moreover, that Descartes, after having proclaimed the analysis of thought as the true point of departure of philosophy, scarcely took his first step ere he borrowed the processes of geometry. The great thinker departed from thought; the great geometrician threw over thought the form of geometry. It was thus with his successors: all are geometricians. Leibnitz is even the genius of mathematics. He sought and carried even to abuse the apparent rigor of geometrical demonstration.\*

In the seventeenth century the Cartesian philosophy claimed

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\* This rapid sketch needs to be elucidated by the examination of passages in which the Cartesian philosophy is more minutely treated; see, for example, Vol. 2d of this Series, Lecture 3 and Lecture 11, and in 1st Series, Vol. 1st, Lecture 6; Vol. 4th, Lecture 12, p. 64; Lecture 22, p. 508-520, and Vol. 5th, Lecture 6, p. 210-222. See, above all, the *Fragments de Philosophie Cartésienne*, passim.

for itself the aristocracy of thinkers. It remained to make it descend with all its good qualities and its imperfections into inferior regions ; it remained to imbue new generations with its spirit, by introducing it into instruction. Descartes was a gentleman and a soldier ; writing his books for his own satisfaction, and bequeathing them to posterity, without giving himself any trouble for their success ; Malebranche was a meditative man, Spinoza a recluse, Leibnitz a statesman who has left nothing but fragments of various sorts. There was wanting to Cartesianism a great professor ; such is the place and destiny of Wolf. The Cartesian philosophy received from the hands of Wolf a severe and regular dress, but somewhat pedantic, such as philosophy will almost always receive from the hands of a professor. Already Descartes and his successors were inclining to the geometrical form ; this form took an exclusive character in the writings and in the teachings of Wolf. Every thing there proceeded by principles, by axioms, by definitions, and by corollaries. After having gone out from the schools, philosophy was just about re-entering them. Thus come revolutions : at first they rush beyond their aim, then they return to place themselves again near to the point of their departure. They never recede ; but after many movements, they are contented with having advanced a single step ; and step by step humanity finds at last that it has performed a long journey. But it makes only one step at a time. The first Cartesian movement ended with Wolf ; then its circle was completed ; it arrived at its last terminus in all things : its form, its method, its doctrine, in evil as in good, found their last development.

Cartesianism, after Wolf, had but one thing to produce, a history of philosophy. All its conditions were in it ; immense interest spread over philosophical matters by a generation of great men, a new method, a system complete, psychological, logical, ontological, cosmological, mathematical, so that of all the systems which the past could present, there was not a single one which the new philosophy could not meet, embrace, and measure.

A single condition still remained to be fulfilled. In order to

write the history of philosophy, it is not enough that one should be interested in the past, and that one should be capable of comprehending it; it, moreover, is necessary to know it, and to know it perfectly: studies, various and profound, painful researches are needed; in a word, erudition is, so to speak, an exterior condition which must be joined to the intrinsic conditions which I have brought before you, in order that a history of philosophy may be possible. Now these conditions were already admirably fulfilled in Germany at the time of Wolf: all the world knows that Germany is the classic land of erudition and of historical criticism.

These different motives combined explain the necessity of a history of philosophy, and the necessity of Brucker. Brucker is the representative of the first movement of modern philosophy in the history of philosophy. Herein is also explained his merits and his defects.

The eminent merit which the great work of Brucker presents, at first view, is its completeness. The *Historia Critica Philosophiæ* begins almost with the world and the human race, and ends only with the last days of the life of the historian. It is wonderful with what care Brucker has searched into the first traces of philosophy: he commences with the deluge; he has even attempted to ascend beyond, to a *philosophia antediluviana*. Nor has young America escaped his attention; he has ransacked its most barbarous portions in order to discover philosophical vestiges. One could not have more respect for reason, for philosophy, for humanity; for this reason Brucker merits, in the highest degree, the respect of every friend of humanity and of philosophy. He has embraced all the systems of all ages. He does not content himself with superficial glimpses; the conscientious erudition of Brucker has fathomed every thing. Brucker has read all the works of which he speaks; and when he has not been able to procure any one of them, which was unavoidable, he speaks of it only from precise information, carefully citing his authorities, in order not to lead into error. Brucker is certainly one of the most learned men of his times. His impartiality is not less than his

erudition. He gives long and faithful extracts of each doctrine, which he divides and subdivides into a certain number of articles, classified and numbered with a care which seems to leave nothing to be desired. In general, order is one of the great merits of Brucker. He follows the chronological order, the order even in which it has been given to humanity to develop itself; he exhibits, scrupulously, all systems in their real succession, with clear and precise classifications, the apparent rigor of which reminds us of Wolf, and shows us that Brucker is in history the representative of a school of geometricians.

The defects of Brucker consist in the exaggeration of his best qualities. As I have said, he goes back before the deluge, and loses himself in the most minute researches upon what he calls *philosophia barbarica* and *philosophia exotica*. Thence it happens that, although he may have separated philosophy from theology, the fear of being incomplete makes him sometimes forget the strictness of this division.\* In fine, if there is a little philosophy in nascent humanity, there is much more of religion and mythology. Brucker, who never mingles these two things in the body of history, confounds them in its origin; he relates the myths of Persia, of Chaldea, and of Syria, which he gives for philosophical systems. It may be said, too, that the criticism of Brucker does not equal his erudition: he cites with the greatest care all his authorities, but he seldom discusses them, and leans often upon monuments of suspicious authenticity. Finally, if I have rendered justice to the order which reigns in the history of Brucker, I ought to add that this order is more apparent than real. Brucker follows the chronological order, but materially, without understanding its depth; he does not know that the external order of succession contains a true order of generation; he does not suspect that systems taken together present a series of causes and effects, united by necessary relations, which are the

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\* On this grave defect of Brucker, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, the fragment entitled, *Du Vrai Commencement de l'Histoire de la Philosophie*, p. 400.

laws of history. All these things have escaped the learned historian. The order of Brucker is nothing else than a veritable confusion concealed under the geometrical dress of Wolfianism, under classifications, divisions, and subdivisions, which appear to resemble a necessary plan, but which really contain no plan.

In summing up, Brucker represents in the history of philosophy the first revolution which has snatched philosophy from the middle age; this first revolution, so glorious for the human mind, produced modern philosophy, but it did not complete it. So the *Historia Critica Philosophiæ* is a monument admirable for extent, erudition, and brilliancy, but it is not, and it could not be, the termination of the history of philosophy. A pupil of the seventeenth century, Brucker flourished in the midst of the eighteenth. Brucker is the father of the history of philosophy, as Descartes is of modern philosophy. His work was the basis of all contemporaneous labors of the same kind. These works, not possessing a peculiar character, we will not occupy ourselves with them here. In order to encounter new histories of philosophy which have a decided character, we must go to new schools of philosophy.

The human mind was obliged to make a new step; it was necessary for modern civilization to advance, and philosophy with it. The result of the Cartesian revolution had been to illuminate the chaos of scholasticism; but the darkness of so long a past was too thick to be dissipated at once and in a day. From the bosom of Cartesianism went forth two philosophies imbued with the same spirit of independence which constitutes all true modern philosophy, starting almost from the same method, but soon divided into two contrary movements, whose powerful and fruitful struggle filled the close of the eighteenth century.

Locke\* is also a child of Descartes; he is imbued with his spirit and his method; he rejects every other authority than that of reason, and he sets out from the analysis of consciousness; but

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\* On Locke, see, in this same Series, Vol. 3, almost entire; and in 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 1.

instead of seeing in consciousness all the elements which it comprehends, without rejecting, entirely, the interior element, liberty and intelligence, he considers more particularly the exterior element; he is, above all, struck with sensation; the philosophy of Locke is a branch of Cartesianism, but it is a straggling one, like Spinozism. This philosophy was to have its development, but it did not have it in the country of its author.\* In England, every thing is insular; every thing stops within certain limits. England, assuredly, is not destitute of invention; but history declares that there is wanting in it that power of generalization which alone draws from a principle all that it contains. Compare the political revolution of England with ours, and see the profound difference in their characters: on one side all is local, and sets out from secondary motives; on the other all is general and ideal. In order that political reform should spread, it has been necessary for it to pass the channel, and develop itself elsewhere:† so was it necessary that the philosophy of sensation should go among a people who, on account of a crowd of reasons, on account of its language almost universal, on account of its central geographical situation, on account of its character at once decided and flexible, endowed, to the highest degree, with the faculty of generalizing its ideas, and, consequently, the most fit to spread them; for an idea is admitted by so many more people as it is more general, as it is less local and confined. It was, then, necessary that the philosophy of Locke should pass into France; it is there alone that it has borne all its fruits, and it is thence that it has spread itself throughout Europe.

The philosophy of sensation is still uncertain in Locke; the English philosopher makes sensation play a great part, but he has place also for reflection. It was a Frenchman who gave to the philosophy of Locke its true character and its systematic

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\* This assertion should not be taken too strictly, for the philosophy of Locke has produced directly in England Hartley and Hume. See *Fragmente de Philosophie Cartesienne*, Preface, p. viii.

† See Vol. 2, Lecture 1.

unity, in suppressing the insignificant and equivocal part which Locke had left to reflection. Condillac\* demonstrated that such a reflection is scarcely any thing else than sensation itself a little modified; he reduced all human faculties to different modes of sensation, so that sensation is the only element, and even the only instrument of knowledge. In fact, according to Condillac, by means of certain circumstances, sensation becomes, successively, attention, comparison, reasoning; it becomes intelligence entire, and even the entire will; it becomes the whole of consciousness, the entire soul. What, then, is the soul? A collection of sensations, more or less generalized, but always without unity, without substance, without causative power. I exhibit the march of Condillac, I do not criticise it; I beg you, on the contrary, to observe the systematic boldness which was necessary to Condillac, in order to bring back every thing to sensation, and push the philosophy of Locke to its necessary consequences. Under this relation the *Traité des Sensations* is a true historical monument. Condillac is the metaphysician of the school; Helvetius is its moralist.† The sensations, besides the character which they have of referring themselves to certain objects, besides their representative property, have also their affective property; they are agreeable or disagreeable. To avoid sensations which may give pain; to search out sensations which may give pleasure; this is the whole of morality in its most general principle. Saint-Lambert‡ is charged with drawing from this principle its applications, and from them composing a code of which pleasure is the foundation, and interest the supreme law. It was necessary that this morality should have its politics: it had them; and was declared, decreed, even, that an individual having no other law than his interest, well or badly understood, a collection of individuals could have no other; that thus these collections of individuals, more or less considerable, which are called nations, had no other

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\* On Condillac, 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 2 and 3, etc.

† On Helvetius, 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 4 and 5.

‡ On Saint-Lambert, 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 6.



law than their will, that is, in the prevailing system, their desires, that is, their good pleasure; that, in a word, the sovereignty of the people was the only legitimate political dogma.\* The same theory has been applied to all sciences, to medicine, for example; and as in metaphysics, the *me*, or soul, was only the collection of our sensations, in physiology, life was only a collection of functions apparently without unity;† the harmony of these functions, which is, nevertheless, a certain fact, becomes thus inexplicable; but all these difficulties have been nimbly surmounted, and medicine has had its entirely empirical philosophy.

. . . A school like this, so complete, and of so clear and so decided a character, must also have had a history of philosophy conformable to it. But remember the necessary condition upon which a history of philosophy is any where reared; laborious habits of erudition, and even of philology, are absolutely necessary to it. Judge how much courage and patience are necessary in order to plunge into the study of works written in learned languages, often half destroyed by time, and so difficult to comprehend that even at the present day, after an entire century of efforts skilfully directed, there is more than one important monument that it has been impossible yet to decipher and interpret well. The history of philosophy is a serious and a painful enterprise; can we engage in it when we have arrived at a system which throws contempt on all others? Without pretending, in an absolute manner, that the contempt of the past inevitably engenders negligence, and, consequently, ignorance, I remark, in fact, that the philosophy of sensation which belongs to England and to France, has had in neither of these countries its history of philosophy; for I do not designate as a history of philosophy whatever assertions Condillac has let fall here and there on certain systems, nor do I allow as a history of philosophy the extracts which it has pleased Diderot

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\* On the sovereignty of the people; for what there is true and false in it, see 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 9, p. 304.

† See the first phrase of the treatise of Bichat, *de la Vie, et de la Mort*, edition of M. Magendie.

to draw from the excellent work of Brucker, in adding to them declamations or epigrams; that is making mockery of the labors of one's fellows, it is not writing history. It was necessary, then, that the school of sensation should find a country where the habit and the taste of erudition might permit it to produce a history of philosophy; it was necessary that it should find the country of Brucker. Doubtless the spirit of Germany resists the philosophy of sensation. At the same time this philosophy could not reign in France without passing the Rhine, as it had passed the Channel. It had then, also, a moment of success in Germany; but as the German spirit opposed it, it had not in Germany, it could not have there, any great representatives. It overcame ordinary minds, among whom it found one who placed all his erudition at the service of this philosophy. But a system too narrow is very inconvenient. However imbued we may be with an idea, intercourse with great masters who have not thought as we do, is a rude trial, and often a useful remedy to systematic obstinacy. Plato, and even Aristotle, when one reads them in their own language, and when one is compelled to study them seriously, disturb somewhat the exclusive point of view of sensation. That is what happened to Tiedemann. His work may well be considered as that which best represents the philosophy of sensation applied to the history of philosophy; but this philosophy is much softened and tempered in passing through German erudition, and Tiedemann reminds us rather of Locke than of Condillac.

The principal merit of Tiedemann is his perfect independence. Empiric philosophy, daughter also of Cartesian philosophy, thus separates, even a little too violently, philosophy from theology. This severity is found to be carried even to rigor in Tiedemann. In the second place, Tiedemann, without being as learned as Brucker, is more critical. It is not sufficient for him to cite his authorities, he discusses them. He is not contented with giving extracts more or less extended from philosophical systems, he penetrates into their spirit, and to make known this spirit he fastens upon them; hence the title of his history: *Esprit de la Phi-*

*philosophie spéculative.* In the third place, Tiedemann followed chronological order, like Brucker; besides, he joined to it a regard more or less profound for political history. Brucker contented himself with applying the great and admitted divisions of political history to that of philosophy, without searching out the real relations which there may have been between the history of philosophy and general history. Tiedemann binds with care the history of systems to the other parts of history. In short, the work of Brucker, like Wolfianism, recommends itself by an apparent clearness which covers a real confusion. On the contrary, the theoretical point of view of Tiedemann being, it is true, limited, but well determined, the application of this point of view to history must give, and, in short, does give, a history of the greatest precision.

The defects of Tiedemann appertain to the school to which he belongs. At first, Tiedemann, in his philosophic independence, separated philosophy from theology, and he was right, for they are things essentially distinct; but the fear of theology throws him into exaggerated scruples. It is very true (and it is also my own opinion) that the East is much more mythological than philosophical, and that it is this above all which distinguishes it from the West; but it must not be pretended that the East contains no philosophy, no trace of reflection; nevertheless, Tiedemann, by reason of the theological aspect which the East presents, cuts it off from the history of philosophy, and begins at Greece. Tiedemann is an excellent critic, but his criticism is sometimes a little too skeptical: he does very well in the discussion of certain authorities too slightly admitted before him: but there are many works which Tiedemann has declared apocryphal, and which now are recognized as authentic, or which, at least, contain certainly in their general ideas, if not in their formal reduction, traditions which must be referred to those to whom these works are attributed. But the greatest defect of Tiedemann is the exclusive spirit which he transports into history. He is too modern, although very erudite, and he does not know how to enter into the

spirit of ancient systems. For example, the celebrated arguments which he has put into the dialogues of Plato, are perpetual absurdities, and one cannot help smiling to see him apply to such monuments the small measure of the philosophy of Locke, *paupertina philosophia*, as it is called by Leibnitz.

One of the merits of Tiedemann, which I had forgotten, and which I hasten to recall to you, is that he is progressive. Brucker hardly knows whether the history of philosophy has advanced or receded since antiquity to our days, whether the future will perfect the past, or whether the future will not do better to stop at the point where the excellent Brucker with his master Wolf have stopped; whilst Tiedemann believes in the perfectibility of human reason, and closes his work by inviting his reader to hope and trust in the future. That is a real merit; but it must be added that Tiedemann has nowhere tried to determine the laws of the general progress of which he speaks; so that, although precise and clear in each part, he is obscure and vague in the whole, or to speak rigorously, he has no whole, he is wanting in order and true plan.

Such is the representative of the school of Locke in the history of philosophy; it now remains to me to exhibit to you the opposing school, and to show you how, having set out from one opposite principle, and having followed it with the same consistency, it must have ended in a history of philosophy entirely opposite.

It is indisputable that in the bosom of consciousness there is an order of phenomena that comes from without, and which thought cannot refer to itself: this truth has its representation in the philosophy of Locke; but it is quite as true that in consciousness there are phenomena which are not reducible to those. It is to thought and not to sensation that we must refer the idea of unity, the idea of necessity, of the infinite, of time, of space, etc., all being ideas, without which there is not a single conception possible. We think only with our thought, and even the exterior world is known to us only because we have the faculty of knowing it, and the faculty of knowing it in general. It is, then,

this faculty, and these laws, which seem to constitute all the reality of external perception itself. It is thus with our soul; it is thus with God, it is thus with every thing, whatever we know can be known only by means of the faculty which we have of knowing, and by the laws of this faculty. Such is the natural and necessary origin of idealism. Idealism is that philosophy which, struck with the reality, the fecundity, and the independence of thought, with its laws and the ideas which are inherent in it, concentrates its attention upon it, and in it sees the principles of all things. Idealism is also true, and it was as necessary as empiricism. Without empiricism you would never have known all that is contained in the bosom of sensualism; without idealism you would have never known all the peculiar power of thought. In the eighteenth century, which seemed entirely occupied by sensualism, idealism had its place, and its necessary place, because it is not in the power of the human mind to abdicate itself, and because when one school takes one of the sides of consciousness for entire consciousness, another school quickly arises, which takes the opposite side, in order, I repeat it, that all the powers of the human mind may be known and developed.

It was in England that the philosophy of sensation made its first appearance; it was from a province of England that a protestation against this philosophy first went forth. I define Scotch philosophy as a protest of common sense against the extravagances of the last consequences of sensualism.\* This is its title to the esteem of good men. But it went scarcely further in this new road than Locke went in his. The Scotch school has reclaimed the forgotten elements of human nature; it has restored to honor some of the fundamental ideas of reason; it has described them with the characters which at present they incontestably possess; it has admirable commencements of psychology, but it has not a complete metaphysics; it has somewhat of morals and politics, but properly speaking it has no system. The merit

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\* On the Scotch school, see 1st Series, Vol. 1, and Vol. 4 entire.

of the Scotch, as that of Locke, is good sense and clearness ; their defects, like those of Locke, too, are the absence of speculative thought and extension ; add, moreover, that the chief of the Scotch school, Reid,\* is wanting in erudition. Such a school could not have a history of philosophy. It is by common sense that the human race attains to truth, and then rests without rendering to itself an account of it ; it is by the instinct of a generous good sense, that souls of a certain temper escape the philosophy of sensation ; that is the point of departure of science, but it is not science ; and even as the philosophy of sensation had not been able, in the hands of Locke, to reach its entire development, so the spiritualism of the Scotch school, a little dim, could not attract the attention of Europe, and struggle successfully upon a great theatre against the seductions and genius of the opposing school. In short, as it was necessary that the philosophy of Locke should pass the Channel, in order to make its fortune, so it was necessary that spiritualism should find some other land than that of Scotland where it might display its power and the fecundity of its principles.

In France it has been represented by two men, of whom one, M. Turgot,† being early drawn aside from philosophy by politics, sustained against the consequences of the philosophy of Condillac, a combat feeble and without eclat ; the other, more a literary man than a philosopher, sometimes the champion and sometimes the adversary of the reigning philosophy, exhausted his admirable eloquence in protestations, occasionally sublime, but without any scientific character. It may be seen that I speak of Rousseau.‡

It was reserved for Germany, that serious and meditative country, which had already produced Leibnitz and Wolf, to give to idealism its true representative in the eighteenth century. Kant, as Locke, was a pupil of Descartes ; he has the same gen-

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lecture 22, p. 505, and following with the note, p. 525.

† See the preceding Lecture, note on Turgot.

‡ On Rousseau, 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 4 and 5, and Lecture 9 ; 2d Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 18.

eral character, the same method as Locke, for this character and this method are ever the method and character of modern philosophy. He separated, with a firm hand, philosophy from theology: he starts from the analysis of consciousness; but he attaches himself to the element opposed to that which Locke has particularly considered. The great undertaking of Kant is a *criticism* of reason and its laws; his glory is to have given the complete statistics of these laws. He is not contented with indicating them, he pursues them, he pursues them in all the spheres of thought, enumerates them, describes them, classifies them.

Apparet domus intus . . .

Kant is, with Reid, one of the founders of rational psychology; but he stopped not there. The laws of reason being enumerated, described, and classified, Kant asks how, from these laws, we may arrive, legitimately, at the exterior world, at God, at all that which is not the thinking subject; and in his logical severity, it seems to him that these laws being peculiar to the subject of thought, that is, being purely subjective, it is improper to draw from subjective laws any objective and ontological consequence. Doubtless it is a fact, a fact of consciousness, that we believe in the exterior world, in God, in other existences than our own; but we believe in them only on the faith of our own laws; so that these beliefs resting on a basis entirely subjective, contain, when we wish to open before them the limits of consciousness, a parallogism, a vicious circle. Kant has almost cut off ontology from philosophy; by dint of having dwelt in the depths of thought, he has taken it for the only real world; he has magnified psychology, but he has almost made of it entire philosophy. Hence, morality concentrated in intention; in esthetics, the beautiful and the sublime considered almost exclusively in their relations with man, centre and measure of all things; in short, a philosophy of nature which consists in the application of the subjective laws of thought to the exterior world. Fichte has gone further still in the same way. In Kant, the point of view under which the

thinking subject considers objects, depends on its own nature. In Fichte, the object itself being for the subject only what the subject makes it, is but an induction of this subject. According to Kant, God is a necessary conception of thought, an irresistible belief of the soul. According to Fichte, God is the subject itself of thought conceived as absolute; he is still, then, the *me*; only Fichte distinguishes two *mes*, the one phenomenal, the *me* of which each of us has a consciousness; the other, the basis itself and the substance of the *me*, which is God himself: God is the absolute *me*.<sup>\*</sup> When we have reached this point, we have arrived at the last term of subjective idealism, as the philosophy of sensation had arrived at its last term when it dared to pretend that the soul is only a collection of our sensations. The philosophy of Kant and of Fichte absorbs consciousness, and by that all things, into thought, as the philosophy of Locke and of Condillac absorbs consciousness, and by that all things also, into sensation; and even as sensualism destroys itself after having reached its last consequence and the extravagance of baseness, so idealism has its sublime extravagance, in which it finds its ruin. But before disappearing, this doctrine would have been untrue to itself if it had not had its representative in the history of philosophy; and the condition of erudition being superabundantly fulfilled in Germany, the great philosophical movement of Kant and of Fichte easily found a worthy representative in a skilful and learned man, who composed, at the point of view of critical philosophy, a history of philosophy, as opposite to that of Tiedemann, as the subjective idealism of Kant is opposite to the empiricism and sensualism of Condillac and of Locke; this man is the celebrated Tennemann.

The general character of Tennemann's work is to reproduce the philosophy of Kant in the history of philosophy. The philosophy of Kant is profoundly Cartesian: it separates philoso-

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<sup>\*</sup> On the philosophy of Kant and that of Fichte, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, *Discours d'Ouverture*, p. 10; and for Kant in particular, Vol. 5.



phy from theology, and admits no other method than psychology. Tennemann separates, therefore, philosophy from theology in history quite as rigorously as Tiedemann has done: besides, he carries his scruples as far as his predecessor. That is his first merit: the second is, that the idealism of Kant being infinitely more wide than the empiricism of Locke, Tennemann was more capable of comprehending and appreciating the great monuments of philosophy; his historical point of view is more comprehensive, and consequently less negative. Then, too, Tennemann is quite as erudite, and quite as good a critic as Tiedemann, and he is less skeptical; he restores to many works their authenticity, which his predecessor had attacked. His expositions are at the same time more extended, and as faithful; the spirit of each system is not seized with less sagacity, and general views are there sustained by developments which confirm and elucidate them. Tennemann connects also more closely the history of the philosophy of each epoch with the general history of the same epoch; clearness and precision appear not less in him than in Tiedemann, more perhaps in him; and already a better order, less exterior and less arbitrary, gives to the entire work a character more philosophical. In indicating the general ideas which have governed in different epochs, and in expressing these ideas under forms belonging to the science whose history he is writing, to wit, metaphysics, Tennemann has opened the road to that superior point of view which, in history, perceives ideas, their succession, their struggle, their development so regular through their apparent disorder, that is, a true system, a philosophy entire. Doubtless Tennemann has but imperfectly observed the philosophical movement of history; but he has at least observed it; that is, perhaps, his greatest merit. His fault is that of having borrowed his frame and his measure from a system not sufficiently extended to embrace all systems. The philosophy of Kant is very vast compared with that of Condillac; but the human mind is still more vast, and the innumerable systems which it has sown through centuries, are a little straitened and ill at

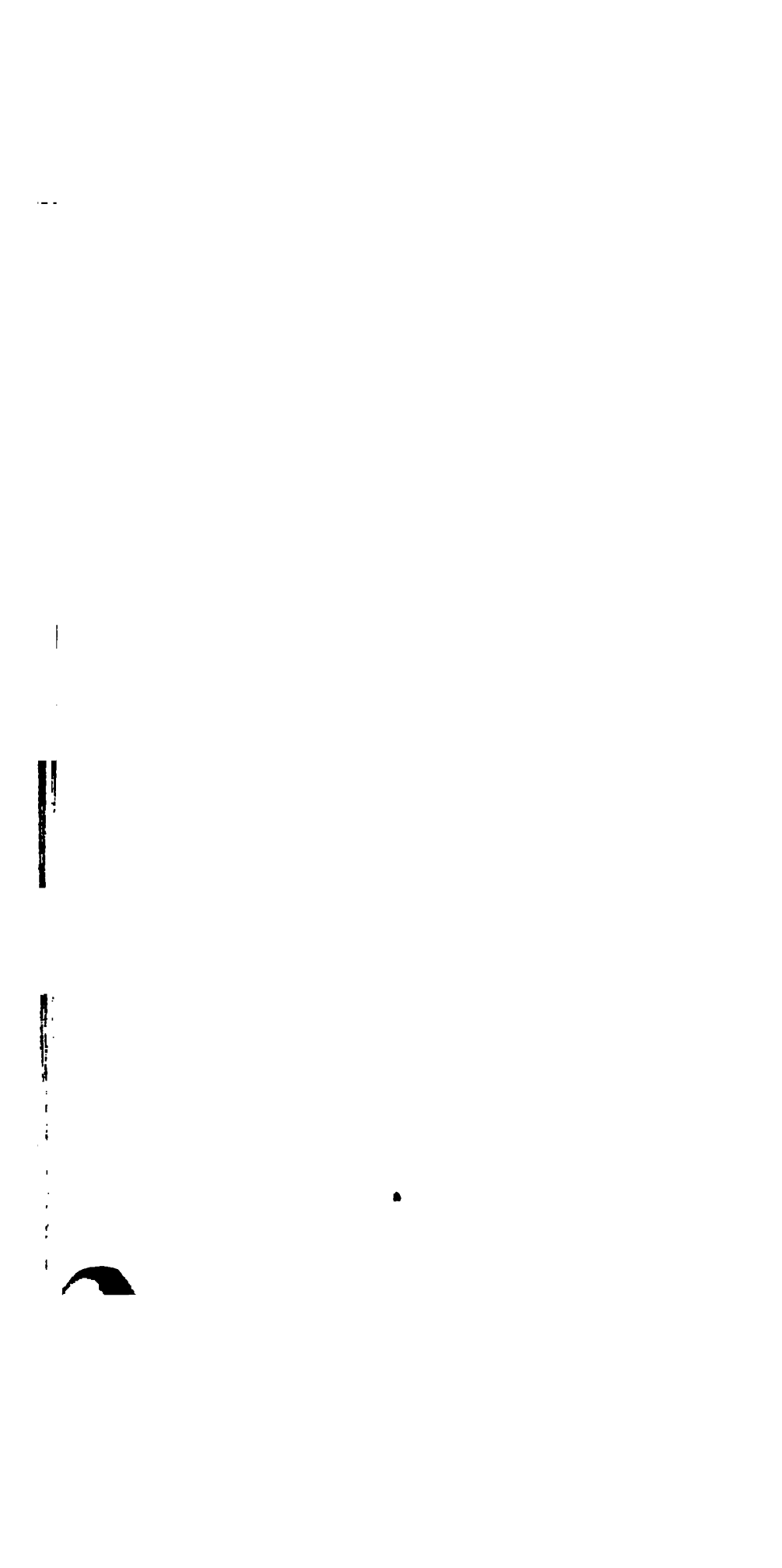
be forgotten that Kant, like Wolf, was a  
his youth passed through the philosophy of  
acquired, with the taste for geometry and th  
of an inflexible formalism, the dread of m  
a precision carried even to dryness, the ha  
and a language fixed and profoundly dete  
which lead him often to a terminology more  
very convenient for instruction, but depriv  
made more for the school than for the work  
are of an admirable precision, but the forms  
sents them, the etiquette which he puts in  
the profane, and even somewhat so to men  
that may pass, to a certain point, in a book  
exposes his own ideas ; he is free to presen  
but imagine the effect of formulas strange a  
imposed upon the entire history of philosop  
out taste ! The philosophy of Kant is for Te  
of Procrustes ; he stretches upon it all syst  
which does not fit it. Thus the stoics are t  
of a master ; but Plato not so well, and th  
escape on all sides critical philosophy, t  
learned historian who has great trouble nc  
madmen, without discussion. In the mean t  
the learned man sends him away and th

ance of it, we are sure to see arise a hail-storm of arguments and Kantian formulas against this poor system. This manner somewhat spoils the great and estimable work of Tennemann, and renders it less agreeable for reading than that of Tiedemann, to which it is otherwise much preferable,—the last contrast between these two historians, which brings to mind that which separated their masters, of whom one, infinitely more precise and more positive than the other, has a clearness much less popular.\*

Behold the two histories of philosophy which were necessarily produced by the two great systems whose struggle filled the close of the eighteenth century. Tiedemann and Tennemann represent this struggle in the history of philosophy. Such is the present state of things, such is the inheritance which the eighteenth century has left to the nineteenth. Such has been, and such necessarily must have been, the work of the century which is no more. What will be that of the century to come? What are my own projects and my own hopes? This will be the subject of the next and last lecture.

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\* One may form an idea of the merits and defects of the great work of Tennemann by his *Manuel*, which we have translated, 2 vol. in-8, 2d ed. 1839.



## LECTURE XIII.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

**Present state of the history of philosophy: works of detail.—Necessity of a new general history of philosophy. That its condition is a new philosophical movement.—Determination of the character of this new movement: eclecticism.—Symptoms of eclecticism in European philosophy.—Roots of eclecticism in the condition of society in Europe, and particularly in France. Analysis of the Charter.—Necessary consequences of the reign of the Charter, even upon the character of philosophy.—Corresponding character which the history of philosophy ought to take.—Conclusion.**

TIEDEMANN and Tennemann close the eighteenth century. The work of Tiedemann appeared from 1791 to 1797; that of Tennemann from 1798 to 1820. Since that time there has appeared in Germany no considerable work upon the history of philosophy which presents an original character and forms an epoch: no great historian has come to revive Tiedemann and Tennemann.\* And as, after Herder, universal histories of humanity were succeeded by particular histories of certain nations, of certain epochs, of certain branches of civilization, so, after the two great opposing works in which the philosophy of the eighteenth century resolved itself, the universal history of philosophy was succeeded by examinations of certain schools, certain systems, and by profound monographies. From the nature of things, these researches in accumulating create the necessity of a new universal history. Thus science progresses; it proceeds from partial works to collections; decomposition, recomposition, such is its perpetual movement. At the present time, in Germany and in the whole world, it is in a state of decomposition. This condition has its necessity in the economy of the labor of a period, and already

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\* We spoke thus in 1828, before the enterprise of M. Ritter.

the illustrious president of the Academy of Berlin, has at last furnished Europe with the philosophical system which it possesses for the philosophy of the future. The sprightly author of the memoirs of his fine researches into the Chinese has, thus to speak, discovered Oriental philosophy, renewed the knowledge of philosophy, and introduced criticism into it. Among so many philosophers in crowds, I will mention our friends, MM. Schleiermacher, Brandt, and the philosophy of Plato, that of Aristotle, already so much indebted. It is a debt which ancient philosophy has not ceased to pay to it, year by year, by its precious monographies. The philosophy of the modern philosophy have not, any more than the others; and if I dwell less upon it, it is because a part of the history of philosophy, quite as interesting as any other, erudition is less much more easy. We go forth from it to understand it almost without any of the labors of the historian of philosophy, erudition and criticism, is, and always. It is there that a civilization entirely different from our

tion of the small number that remain, the difficulty of the idiom, the profound difference of ideas, the originality of forms, all oppose to the historian obstacles that can be surmounted only by the aid of indefatigable patience, the most minute erudition, the most circumspect criticism, and intelligence at the same time the most penetrating and most flexible. It is there, also, that were formed the three great historians of philosophy, Brucker, Tiedemann, and Tennemann. Whoever shall not have served his apprenticeship, and shall not have long lived in antiquity amidst manuscripts and texts, and even in the midst of philological discussions, will never possess the sentiment of criticism, and will always be incapable of writing a serious history of philosophy. It is for this reason that I do not hesitate to exhort those of my young auditors who might feel attracted to this important part of history, to concentrate their studies for some time upon antiquity. If I may be permitted to cite myself, notwithstanding the generality of my philosophical labors, I have not ceased for twelve years, and I shall never cease to occupy myself assiduously, not only with the principal epochs of ancient philosophy, but with the particular systems of which each epoch and each school is composed; for it is my perfect conviction that there, above all, it is necessary to mingle the profound study of details with the generalization of ideas, and that partial researches, wisely and firmly combined, can alone lead to results as solid as they are extensive.\*

Such is the present state of the history of philosophy: this state is necessary and good, but it cannot be eternal; and as every precipitate generalization leads to the necessity of a decom-

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\* I have given the example, and I have been followed. Thank God my work is accomplished: the history of philosophy is founded in France. There is not an epoch, a philosophical school, that has not been profoundly studied; in particular, ancient philosophy counts among us numerous and intelligent interpreters, who do not yield it to the most distinguished scholars of Holland and Germany. It is pleasant to me to see my own works already surpassed by those of former disciples who, in their turn, have become masters.

position, so it is impossible that a vast decomposition may not soon lead to a new recomposition, and that so many skilful and profound researches may not, sooner or later, produce a new general history of philosophy.

But on what condition can this new history arise? If works of detail are the necessary materials of a history of philosophy, it is not erudition, it is philosophy alone that can rear the edifice. It was the Cartesian philosophy that produced Brucker, it was the philosophy of Locke that produced Tiedemann, it was the philosophy of Kant that produced Tennemann; so now it is the breath of a new philosophical spirit that, in passing over all the results, certain, but apparently limited and sterile, of erudition, can alone fructify them and draw from them a universal history. Now what is, what can be, this new spirit, this new philosophy, which alone can renew the history of philosophy? Such is the question: to answer it we must consider the position of philosophy at the present day.

The philosophy which preceded Descartes was theology. The philosophy of Descartes is the separation of philosophy from theology; it is, thus to speak, the introduction of philosophy upon the stage of the world under its proper name. The philosophy of the eighteenth century is the development of the Cartesian movement in two opposite systems, the spiritualism of the Scotch school, and of the German school, and English and French sensualism. In regard to sensualism, none can go beyond the eighteenth century in England and in France. Take it at its point of departure in Locke; follow it even to our days in its last representatives, and you will see nothing is wanting to this great movement—psychology, metaphysics, morals, politics, history of humanity, history of philosophy; all that a great philosophical movement can produce, sensualism has produced; it only remains to adopt it without the hope even of adding any thing very considerable to it; that is, it is necessary to suppose that philosophy is completed, that it has no other future than a monotonous repetition of the past, and that the human mind must stop at the



commencement of the nineteenth century. This is an important stand to take; and, nevertheless, there is no other, for there is not a single great new consequence to be drawn from the philosophy of sensation. On the other hand, who will flatter himself in regard to idealism, to go beyond the system of Fichte? Idealism, weak still among the wise but timid philosophers of Scotland, already manifest in the too subjective philosophy of Kant, has arrived at its last term in the absolute subjectivity of the doctrine of Fichte. And as this doctrine has received all its possible development, as it has had its psychology, its metaphysics, its morals, its politics, its history of humanity and of philosophy, it remains to do for the idealism of the school of Kant only what remains to be done for the sensualism of the school of Locke, that is, it is necessary to stop at it, sleep upon it, in some fashion as upon the utmost limit of thought; as if in this point of time and space where we now are, all truths had been revealed at last to the human mind, and nothing more remained to be sought beyond it!

Do you content yourselves with one or the other of these two exclusive systems? You condemn your thought to immobility: or it is necessary to leave the system of Kant, like that of Locke, pass beyond them, and do, as do humanity and the world, which, I think, have no desire to stop at the end of the eighteenth century. Behold yourselves then seeking a new system. But seek as much as you please, study, probe, compare all the systems that have appeared for three thousand years, and you will see that in the last analysis, they may all be reduced to those which you have just rejected, idealism and sensualism: so that you can neither be able to embrace them nor yet forsake them. It is demonstrated to you that neither the one nor the other are the last effort of the human race, and it is also demonstrated to you that there is no system which is not reducible to one or the other of these two. What is, then, to be done? Having avoided these two vicious solutions of the problem, namely, the adoption of one or the other of these two systems, or the tormenting ourselves

with seeking a new one, which should be neither the one nor the other more or less modified, we arrive at the only solution that is left, the abandonment of all the exclusive sides by which the two systems repel each other, the adoption of all the truths which they contain, and by which they are established, and the conciliation of all these truths in a point of view more elevated and more extended than either system, capable of containing them, of explaining them, and of completing them both. You see to what I wish to come. After the subjective idealism of the school of Kant, after the empiricism and sensualism of the school of Locke, developed and exhausted in their last possible results, there is, in my opinion, no longer any other new combination than the union of these contraries, I mean apparent contraries, in the centre of a vast and powerful eclecticism.

Eclecticism! that name well or badly chosen, and which already begins to be spread and to resound a little through France and elsewhere, that name involuntarily carries back my thoughts to the epoch, now quite remote, when for the first time it was pronounced from this chair without éclat and without echo, in the obscurity of my first teachings.

It was in 1816 and 1817\* that, tormenting in every sense my consciousness in order to embrace it in all its extent, I arrived at this result, that there is in the consciousness many more phenomena than had yet been thought of; that, in truth, all these phenomena were opposed to each other, but that in appearing to exclude each other, they all, nevertheless, had their place in consciousness. Entirely occupied with method and psychology, plunged into studies the most minute, I scarcely went beyond the limits of observation and a very circumspect induction; but little by little the scene enlarged, and from psychology, which is the vestibule, and if one may so express it, the antechamber of science, time conducted me into the sanctuary, that is, into metaphysics.

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\* See 1st Series, Vol. 1, *Discours prononcé à l'Ouverture du Cours*, December 5, 1816, p. 248.

The more I have progressed in life and in science, the more I am confirmed in the thought that still presides in these lectures.

What, in fact, is the philosophy that I teach, if not respect for all the elements of humanity? Our philosophy is not a melancholy and fanatical philosophy which, preoccupied with a few exclusive ideas, undertakes to reform all others upon them; no, it is a philosophy essentially optimistic, the aim of which is to comprehend all things; its unity is not a systematic and artificial unity, it is a harmony, the living harmony of all truths, even when they appear opposed.

Thus in regard to method, we retain, as the conquest of the age, the taste for experimental researches, observation, and induction joined to observation, in a word, analysis; but we reject not the old synthesis; we give as a support to analysis, a primitive synthesis, which furnishes to it a matter upon which it can exercise itself. You have seen that we appeal without cessation to the authority of those general beliefs which constitute the common sense of the human race; and doubtless we must set out from common sense and return to common sense under pain of extravagance; but if common sense is the point of departure and the necessary end of all healthy philosophy, science is far from being achieved when common beliefs have been gathered together; it is necessary to penetrate into their secret, origin, and reach. The process of philosophy is the unlimited employment of reflection, the indefatigable research into the last results to which free speculation can conduct.

In psychology, we have recognized in the consciousness the *me* or voluntary and free activity, with the retinue of facts which depend upon it; and, at the same time, the phenomenon of sensation which the *me* has not effected, and which it cannot refer to itself, and which it is constrained to refer to something exterior and foreign, which is called the *not-me*: in fine, above the *not-me* and the *me*, causes relative and limited, substances real but finite, the reason, which is the light of consciousness, reveals to man being in itself, the substance and the absolute, necessary, infinite

cause, etc., in a word, God himself. God, the *me*, and the *not-me*, are the three permanent objects of consciousness; not only are they found in consciousness, such as it is actually developed, but they are found in the first fact of consciousness as in the last. Thus eclecticism is already in the limits of consciousness, as the condition and the foundation of a true psychological theory. Logic, too, demands eclecticism. The two fundamental laws of logic are, as we have seen,\* the finite and the infinite, the contingent and the necessary, the relative and the absolute, etc.; in the last analysis, the idea of cause and the idea of substance. All systems of logic turn upon one and the other of these two ideas. They must be united; it is necessary to conceive that every cause supposes a substance, a *substratum*, a basis of action, as every substance contains necessarily a principle of development, that is, a cause. The substance is the foundation of the cause as the cause is the form of the substance:† the first idea is not the second, but both are inseparable. Thence the gravest consequences in metaphysics and ontology. Is God to be considered as a substance purely, and which is not a cause, as Spinoza will have it, or at most as a cause of himself which is not a true cause? We thus destroy his power, we destroy the possibility of humanity and that of nature; we have, like the Eleatics, the infinite in itself, but without any relation to the finite, the absolute without any relation to the relative, unity without diversity. On the other hand, do we plunge in the exclusive idea of the cause, of the cause operative, that is, in the relative, the contingent, the multiple, and do we refuse to go beyond it? We stop, then, at the form of things, and fail of their essence and of their principle. We can thus end only in a chimerical theism, or an extravagant theism. True theism is not a dead religion, that forgets precisely the fundamental attribute of God, namely, the creative power, action, and what is derived from it. Pantheism is in pos-

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\* Lecture 4, p. 79, and following.

† Ibid., and 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lecture 6, p. 77, and at the end of the volume of fragments, entitled: *Des premier et du dernier Fait de Conscience*, p. 419.

session of all observable and visible reality, and of its immediate laws, but it misconceives the principle even of this reality, and the first and last reason of its laws.\* Thus, on all sides, diverse methods, diverse systems in psychology, in logic, and in metaphysics, on all sides opposition and contradiction, error and truth, all together. The only possible solution of these contradictions is in the harmony of contrarieties, the only means of escaping error is to accept all truths.

When one has arrived at these results, then, but only then, can one think of the history of philosophy. Suppose that we had not arrived there, but had stopped at psychology, for example, we would not be in a condition to begin the history of philosophy. The human mind bears within itself certain problems which the great interpreters of the human mind have tried to resolve. If you have retrenched or eluded these problems, how will you be able to comprehend the solutions of them which have been given by the masters of science? How will you judge Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz? You cannot do it. It only remains to you, then, to bid adieu to the history of philosophy, or what would be still worse, to treat it lightly: both are equally unworthy of the nineteenth century. It is necessary, then, after having been to the end of psychology, to enter into metaphysics, and to make a system that may render account of all the wants of thought, in order to be able to reckon also with other systems, interrogate them, and judge them. You see why, although the chair confided to my care was a chair of the history of philosophy, those who have followed me in my lectures from 1815 to 1818,† must have remarked that, without neglecting the history of philosophy, I have been more occupied in fixing my own ideas than in judging those of others. It was in 1819 that eclecticism, which sprang up in 1816, having run over and embraced all parts of philosophy, and, finally, having taken a systematic character, was applied by me to the

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\* See Lecture 5, with the Notes of the Appendix.

† See the first two volumes of the 1st Series.

history of philosophy, commencing with the best known and most modern systems. Since then my labors have never abandoned, and will never abandon this direction. It is the only one which it seems to me can conduct to new and satisfactory results in speculative philosophy and in history. When we reject neither in consciousness, nor in things, nor in ourselves, nor in nature, nor in God, any real elements which are therein encountered, we have not to proscribe in history any of the great systems which divide it, and which, however exclusive and deficient they may be, are necessarily borrowed from some real element; for there is no system absolutely chimerical. Eclecticism may, then, be transported from philosophy to the history of philosophy; it renews them both. Such is the double reform which I have undertaken, and which constitutes the character of my teaching, and the utmost aim of all my labors.

But is it not a chimera which I am pursuing? Is not eclecticism an honest dream, born in my mind, doomed to die there, and there accomplish all its destiny? Or has this dream some chance of being realized, and is there already in the present any symptom which permits us to see the germ of the future? In other terms, what is, at present, the character of philosophy in Europe?

It was from England and from Scotland, as you know, that went forth, in the eighteenth century, the first rays of sensualism and of spiritualism. But England, for some time, almost a quarter of a century, has not paid her part of philosophical researches to European civilization: there has not gone forth from England any celebrated work in metaphysics. Observe that I do not say no work of any merit; I do not here create myself a judge; I believe glory a very good judge; I interrogate her, and she does not present to me any work of English philosophy which has excited in a great degree the attention of Europe. On the other hand, the Scotch school, this noble protestation of common sense against the extravagances of sensualism, the Scotch school, after having furnished a career more wise and more use-

ful than brilliant, has just lost its last celebrated interpreter in Dugald Stewart.\*

The two great philosophic nations of Europe are at present Germany and France. The nations of the south are either still in the bonds of the theology of the seventeenth century, or are following in the train of France.† France governs the South of Europe; it is always the past of France that forms the present of the *élite* of the inhabitants of Portugal, of Spain, and of Italy; and the future of France will decide their future. As the South is represented by France, so the North is represented by Germany. Sweden, Denmark, Poland, and the most civilized countries of Austria and Russia, follow the movement of Germany. The French and German people, then, alone, remain in the world of ideas, upon the theatre of Europe. The question in regard to the present state of European philosophy is resolved into this: where is philosophy in Germany, and where is it in France? In Germany it had terminated with the eighteenth century in the most exclusive idealism, and in France in the most exclusive sensualism. Where, then, is now idealism in Germany and sensualism in France? Such is the question. Let us interrogate facts. I ask if in France, for fifteen years, it is not of public notoriety that the philosophy of Locke, of Condillac, of Helvetius, of Saint-Lambert, who until then reigned without contradiction, has been attacked with more or less success by adversaries whom one may judge as he pleases, but whose number has been unceasingly in-

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\* Died June 11, 1828. The great injury done to the Scotch school by the superficial teaching, skepticism, and sensuality of Thomas Brown, is being repaired little by little under the discipline of better masters, and particularly of Sir W. Hamilton, professor of logic at the University of Edinburgh. On Sir W. Hamilton, see 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lecture 22; note of page 525, and the preface of the third edition of the *Fragments Philosophiques*.

† At present, things are very much changed, at least in Italy. Never, since the sixteenth century, has this ingenious country cultivated philosophy with so much ardor and success, and Naples, for a long time, has not produced a philosopher as eminent as M. Galluppi. See the preface of the third edition of the *Fragments Philosophiques*.

creasing? It must not be forgotten that it was from the Faculty of letters that went forth the first remonstrances against the philosophy of the eighteenth century.

M. Laromiguière, in separating attention from sensation, established already a fruitful distinction.\* The manly good sense, and powerful dialectics of M. Royer-Collard, gave to sensation blows still more severe: my illustrious predecessor† has the honor of having first introduced in France the wise doctrines of Scotch philosophy. A man who is no more, and whom it is just to call the greatest metaphysician that has honored France since Malebranche, almost without knowing the contemporaneous works of Germany, and led by the instinct of a superior sagacity, arrived little by little, from metamorphosis to metamorphosis, to a point of view, to which there was only wanting more consequence, amplitude, and boldness in order to resemble that of Fichte. It was far from sensation, in the depths of voluntary and free activity, that M. de Biran sought the origin of the most elevated ideas that are at present in consciousness.‡ Finally, M. Degérando, in his second edition of the *Systèmes comparés de Philosophie*, began to give more attention to idealistic theories, until then disdained, and was quite astonished to find for them interest and equity on the part of a French philosopher.§ Why should I not say that there have gone forth from the Normal school pupils who are at present masters, and who by their lectures and their writings have increased and spread the new philosophical movement?|| In short, it is an incontestable fact, that in face of the

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\* See in the *Fragments Philosophiques* the article devoted to the lectures of M. Laromiguière, and in the *Fragments Littéraires* the discourse pronounced at his funeral.

† A selection from the lectures of M. Royer-Collard may be found in the 8d and 4th Vols. of the works of Reid, published by M. Jouffroy.

‡ See the works of M. de Biran, 4 vols. in-8, with the introduction of the editor.

§ On this second edition see the article from the *Fragments Philosophiques*, and in the *Fragments Littéraires* the discourse pronounced at the funeral of M. Degérando.

|| I may at this time name M. Jouffroy, whose premature death has de-



philosophy of Condillac, there is now arising a new philosophy much more idealistic.

Now pass the Rhine; what do you encounter in Germany? Is it still the absolute dominion of the subjective idealism of Kant and of Fichte? No: Fichte died in 1815, and even before his death a new philosophy, unable to stop at the system of absolute subjectivity, and, thus to speak, on the point of the pyramid of the *me*, descended upon the earth, and returned to views more real. The contemporaneous German philosophy, which exercises in Germany as great an influence, as great an authority as did ever that of Kant and Fichte, is entitled *Philosophy of Nature*.<sup>\*</sup> This title alone indicates to you sufficiently a return somewhat towards reality; and as France now does not believe her glory compromised in demanding inspirations from the philosophy of Germany, so it is entirely a patriotic illusion which makes me suppose that the most illustrious representatives of the philosophy of nature are interested in the new French philosophy, and that Munich and Berlin no longer disdain Paris.

What does this mean, gentlemen? Germany regards France; France, who was, thus to speak, isolated from the rest of Europe, turns her eyes towards Germany. To subjective idealism in Germany has succeeded a philosophy which derives its glory from being called the philosophy of nature; and in France, if not upon the ruins, at least in the face of sensualism, has arisen a philosophy to which cannot be refused a decided character of spiritualism. What must be concluded from these changes? It must be concluded that the reign of the exclusive systems of sensualism in France, and of subjective idealism in Germany is

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prived us of so many hopes. He possessed, in the highest degree, the philosophical spirit, and the art of expressing his ideas with a clearness, an elegance, a method truly admirable. See in the *Fragments Littéraires* the discourse pronounced at his funeral.

<sup>\*</sup> It will be understood that it was impossible for me to explain myself on the *Philosophy of Nature*, when its author and his most illustrious disciple, M. Schelling and M. Hegel, two friends so dear, were present. My thoughts concerning it may be found in the preface of the third edition of the *Fragments Philosophiques*.

passed ; that French philosophy, by the new idealism, and German philosophy by the doctrine of nature, aspire to meet and join hands, and that there is forming, in silence, a true eclecticism in European philosophy. Now, if it is true that the new philosophical movement, which is so silently going on in Europe, is an eclectic movement, it follows that eclecticism will be the basis of the new history of philosophy, since it is a necessary law that every philosophy which arrives in its turn to empire, after having accomplished its theoretic development, directs its attention towards the future, interrogates it with the spirit that is in it, and aspires to a history of philosophy which may be conformable to itself. It seems to me that these considerations already sufficiently justify our enterprise. But it has roots yet more deep.

The history of philosophy is necessarily relative, in a given epoch, to the state of speculative philosophy in that same epoch. This is an incontestable point ; and it is still incontestable that, in every epoch, the state of speculative philosophy is relative to the general state of society. Let us apply this principle to the question which occupies us. Its first consequence is, that a new history of philosophy must result from the partial labors now everywhere in progress, and that this history of philosophy will have the same character as the speculative philosophy called to rule in the nineteenth century, and whose character appears to be eclecticism. It then remains to show that this philosophy, which already manifests itself by more than one unequivocal sign, has its necessary foundation in the present state of society in Europe.

After the great political and religious movement which had filled the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe, a new and more important movement was necessary ; civilization was called to a new and more decisive movement. What, in fine, was the eighteenth century ? The struggle of the old society with the new society ; the very idea of the eighteenth century is the necessity of a crisis.\*

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\* See the following volume, Lecture 1, Tableau du 18th siècle.

The French monarchy, after having marched, from conquest to conquest, towards its natural frontiers, and having devoured successively all the particular powers which had tried to oppose its progress, arrived at last, by the genius of Richelieu and of Louis XIV., almost at the utmost boundaries of territory and centralization. There was no longer wanting to France any thing but a better interior organization ; but this organization could take place only by the overthrow of the old one ; and this overthrow was very easy, for the old society was everywhere in ruins. What had the monarchy become in the eighteenth century ? A simple tradition of brilliancy and magnificence, without any charm over the mind of the people, or over that of monarchs themselves. The monarchy, which had been the providence of France, created her, raised her, made her illustrious, was no longer felt by her. Abroad, what had it done for the country ? What useful war, what glorious combats had it to show ? The Seven Years' War, and the battle of Rosbach. And what did it do at home ? What was the life of royalty ? The life of Versailles. The French nobility, that formerly had so much and so well served the country, and that had identified their history with that of all the glorious feats of arms of France, the French nobility had lost the manly habits of their ancestors, and, like royalty, were slumbering in pleasures. The French clergy, after having produced the Church of France in the seventeenth century, degenerated into a worldly clergy, in which impiety was almost in honor, and which has produced the most bitter enemies of Christianity. In short, the French people themselves, deserted by royalty, which no longer employed them ; by the nobility, which no longer gave them an example ; by the clergy, which taught them languidly beliefs which they no longer sustained by the authority of their morals, the French people arrived at a deplorable state of corruption, which was sufficiently betrayed by the success of those works which then circulated among all classes, and carried in them the poison of a systematic immorality. In this state of things, for a thousand reasons, a revolution was inevitable, and it

an exclusive system of a contrary domination of the monarchical State, and of a privileged nobility; public worship, the sovereignty of democracy. But this democracy so formidable struggles to sustain with the necessity of a pure revolutionary council of war, instead of all government of the people, after being resolved must, in order to defend itself still energy, resolve itself into a great intensity with representing it. As has been a man; the sovereignty changed dictator, and a military dictator: our victories, our disasters.

The overturnings, that were not humanity; they have aided, at least the South of Europe; they have seen two peninsulas, people torpid and them that the moment of awakening hand, we have not appeared useful Germany; there also we have been given a movement that has been sides, the revolutionary system sufficient régime, exclusive as that which

peared a moment with the Convention ; it disappeared forever with the Empire.

Now let us turn our eyes towards the North, against which France is always arrayed ; for France draws in her train the South, without accounting to it ; but she is compelled to account to the North, which has its own genius and its own destiny. There were beyond the Rhine thrones absolute, but paternal ; a warlike nobility, who had just covered themselves with glory in the Seven Years' War ; a clergy reformed once for all, enlightened, instructed, enjoying a merited authority ; people honest, industrious, warlike, obedient by the free movement of sympathy and love. By the side of ancient Austria had sprung up two new empires, born at the voice of genius, young, and consequently full of the future, penetrated with a new spirit, and, at the same time, absolute in their form and military in their manners. You have here the fair side of the North. But it must not be forgotten that the nations were entirely in the hands of their chiefs ; that these chiefs disposed of them according to their will, and sometimes disposed of them badly. The people did not at all interfere with their affairs ; there was no national representation, no free expression of thought. Such an order of things was not, surely, the last expression of German civilization, and certainly was destined to come to an end. The formidable contest of the South and North of Europe in the long war between France and Germany, was, in fact, nothing else than the struggle of absolute monarchies and democracy. The result of this struggle was the destruction of democracy in France, and the considerable enfeebling of absolute monarchies in Germany. You know that it is not the people who appear upon the battle-field ; it is the ideas, the causes. Thus at Leipsic and at Waterloo were two causes that encountered each other, those of paternal monarchy and military democracy. Which gained the victory ? Neither. Who was the conqueror, who was the conquered at Waterloo ? Gentlemen, there was no conqueror. No, I protest there was none.

The only conquerors were European civilization and the Charter. Yes, it was the Charter, the voluntary present of Louis XVIII., the Charter maintained by Charles X., the Charter called to govern France, and destined to subdue, I do not say its enemies, it has no more, I hope, but all retarders of French civilization ; it was the Charter that went forth successful from the bloody struggle of the two systems that now have equally had their time, absolute monarchy and democracy. And from one end of Europe to the other this Charter fixes every eye, makes every heart beat, and rallies around it every wish and every hope. Unfortunate imitations of it have sufficiently shown the ardent sympathy of the South of Europe for this last and glorious result of the long labor of our nation. Our old adversaries themselves have hastened to claim the work of the new monarchy. The borders of the Rhine are under excellent, though imperfect imitations of our beautiful Constitution : Bavaria, Wurtemberg, the country of Baden, have now representative governments ; and already in the North, and as far as the Baltic, are spreading attempts at representative governments of inferior degrees in provincial districts. Certainly, since 1815, European civilization is far from having receded : far from it, it has on all sides developed itself : and I repeat it, this Charter that sprang up from the ruins of Waterloo, now covers the greatest and the best part of Europe, and is expected and invoked by the rest.\* Now, if it is an incontestable fact that the future of Europe depends upon it ; if it is a still more incontestable fact that the present and the future of France depend upon it, let us examine what is this Charter, called to such destinies.

It seems, at first view, that the Charter consecrates the social order anterior to the eighteenth century, and which the eighteenth

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\* What progress has been made since 1828 ! Constitutional monarchy is at the present time spread throughout all Germany, immovable Austria excepted. Prussia is preparing itself to join this great movement. Representative government is trying itself in Spain, and even in Greece. The foundation of philosophy is there strengthening and enlarging.

century overturned. In short, I there behold a king, a powerful monarchy, a throne firm and respected ; I there behold a Chamber of Peers invested with privileges, surrounded by universal veneration ; I there see a religion which, taking our children from the cradle, teaches each one, early, his duties in this world, and the end of this life. Behold in the Charter an element which springs not from the French Revolution. It is there, nevertheless, and is necessarily there, and must be better established from day to day, and gain, continually, both respect and power. But is this the only element in the Charter ? No. I see by the side of the throne a Chamber of Deputies, named directly by the people, and co-operating in the making of all the laws that establish and authorize particular measures, so that nothing is done in the remotest village of France, in which the Chamber of Deputies has not a hand. Here is an element entirely new. In the past I perceive some images of it in certain assemblies and judicial bodies ; but it is the image more than the reality ; it is, in truth, only in the wishes of the eighteenth century, and in the irregular attempts of the French Revolution. We have then here, on one hand, an element of the ancient régime, and, on the other, an element of the revolutionary democracy. How are these elements in the Charter ? In fact, they are there, and their union is so intimate, that the most skilful civilian is much embarrassed to define and limit in theory the proper action of each of these two branches of sovereign power ; and there is a fortunate obscurity in regard to the right of the one and the supremacy of the other. Our glorious Constitution is no mathematical fiction of the artificial equilibrium of the legislative and executive powers, vain abstractions which should be left to the infancy of the representative government ; our Constitution is the real union of the king and the people, seeking together the best manner of governing, and being useful to the common country. This is not all : in the Charter, besides the privileges of the Chamber of Peers, I find that, to all Frenchmen, there is access to all places, by virtue of which the lowest soldier, as the author himself of the

Charter has said, carries the baton of the Marshal of France in his cartridge-box; and the commonest Frenchman can, in all careers, arrive even at the foot of the throne. By the side of the religion of the State,\* I see in characters quite as manifest, liberty of worship and liberty of the press, that is, that religious instruction is not wanting to any one, and that liberty of worship permits choice in the different communions of the Church, and that, in short, thanks to the liberty of the press, no truth being smothered, one may determine, in the sincerity of thought, in favor of opinions which seem the most true. Thus I see in the Charter all contrarieties; that is what certain people deplore: there are some who admire in our Constitution only its democratic part, and who would wish to make use of that in order to weaken all the rest; there are others who groan over the introduction of the democratic elements, and turn against them the monarchical part of the Constitution. On both sides is equal error, equal preoccupation with the past, and equal ignorance of the present. On both sides there are persons whose age is highly respectable, and who, not being the offspring of this epoch, are perfectly excusable in not comprehending the nineteenth century and its mission. But thanks to God, every thing shows that time, in its irresistible march, will unite little by little all minds and all hearts in the comprehension and love of this Charter, which contains, at the same time, the throne and the country, monarchy and democracy, order and liberty, aristocracy and equality, all the elements of history, of thoughts, and of things.†

From this, I conclude, that if the French Charter contains all opposed elements founded in a harmony more or less perfect, the spirit of the Charter is (permit me the expression) a true eclecticism. This spirit, in developing itself, is applied to every thing.

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\* The Charter of 1830 has abolished Church and State, and on the proposition of the Duke of Broglie, the Jewish religion has been put in the budget with the different forms of the Christian worship.

† On the constitution suitable to the great civilized nations of the nineteenth century, see 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 10, pp. 330-342.



Already it is reflected in our literature, which contains two elements which may and ought to go together, classic legitimacy and romantic innovation. Without pursuing these applications, I ask if, when all around us is mixed, complex, and mingled together, when all contrarieties exist and exist well together, if it is possible that philosophy should escape the general spirit? I ask if philosophy can avoid being eclectic, when all around it is so, and if, consequently, the philosophical reform undertaken in 1816, and which I shall pursue with firmness in spite of all obstacles, does not necessarily proceed from the general movement of society in all Europe, and especially in France? Eclecticism is so vigorously attacked by the double philosophy of the past, still debated in our midst, for the precise reason alone, that it is a presentiment and forerunner of the future. Eclecticism is moderation in philosophic order; and moderation which can do nothing in the days of crisis, is afterwards a necessity. Eclecticism is the necessary philosophy of the age, for it is the only one that can conform to its wants and to its spirit; and every age terminates upon a philosophy which represents it. This is my most firm conviction. It is not of yesterday; and I know well it is not to be communicated in a day; I know that I am now speaking in 1828, and not in 1850.

These lectures which I have had the honor to give you during this quarter, are a general introduction to my ulterior instruction. This instruction must be the history of philosophy. Now that our theoretical principles and our historical principles are well determined and fixed, we shall be able to steer at our ease in the vast career that is before us; we shall be able to stop voluntarily sometimes at one epoch and sometimes at another, to transport ourselves upon the heights of Himalaya, or descend upon the shores of Greece, or plunge into the middle age and scholasticism, or follow the fruitful traces of modern philosophy and Descartes in England, or in France, or in Germany. Separated from this auditory during eight years, I have wished first to establish my point of departure, and my definite aim, in order that the

French youth who formerly had in me some confidence, might know well, what upon all points and in all things is he who, after a long exile, returns to consecrate the remainder of his life and usefulness to them. Yes, he who now addresses you wishes you to know that he belongs to no party, to no coterie: in politics, he belongs to his country alone: in philosophy, he belongs to no system in particular, but to all, and thus to speak, to the common spirit that animates them, and that is completely developed only by the struggle of all incomplete, exclusive, and hostile principles. He confesses that he is satisfied with his age, with his country, and with the present order of things. He strongly desires the constitutional order, with all its parts, such as they are, without retrenchment, without reserve, without afterthought; here the throne and the public liberties; there Christianity and the sacred rights of examination. I have already made my profession of faith on this last point, and I repeat it willingly. According to my opinion, all truths are wrapt up in Christianity; but these eternal truths can and ought now to be met, disengaged, illustrated by philosophy. At bottom there is but one truth, but truth has two forms, mystery and scientific exposition; I revere the one, and I am here to be the interpreter of the other.

You ought now to know me. I am he who, twelve years ago, surrounded by few, first stammered the name of eclecticism. That is the system whose timid development filled all the first part of my career: it is the same system, extended and enlarged, which shall preside at all my instructions. What I wished in 1815 I wish still: eclecticism in consciousness, in all parts of philosophy, in speculation, and in history, in the general history of humanity, and in the history of philosophy, which is its perfection, such was my aim formerly, and such it is to-day, such is the banner to which I shall always be found faithful.

I am unwilling to part from this audience without begging it to receive my truest thanks for the patient attention which it has

been pleased to lend during all this quarter, to the exposition of the general views which shall govern my instructions. Next year I shall endeavor to establish in explaining them; and I should be happy to find again among you the same zeal for philosophy, and the same indulgence for the professor.



**COURSE OF THE HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**MODERN PHILOSOPHY,**  
**SECOND SERIES.**  
**VOL. II.**

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# HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

## IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

YEAR 1880—FIRST HALF-YEAR.

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### SKETCH OF A GENERAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY UP TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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#### LECTURE I.

##### PICTURE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

**Subject of the course:** History of philosophy in Europe during the eighteenth century.—Recalling of the principle that the philosophy of a century proceeds from all the elements of which that century is composed ; therefore the necessity of searching for the philosophy of the eighteenth century in the general history of that century.—Subject of this first lecture : Review of the eighteenth century.—General mission of the eighteenth century : to bring the middle age to a close ; hence the two great characteristics of the eighteenth century, the generalization and the diffusion of the principle of liberty.—Politics.—Religion.—Manners.—Literature.—Arts.—Mathematical, physical, and natural sciences.—Moral sciences.—Work of all these elements during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Necessity of an explosion.—French Revolution. Its characteristics.—Its good ; its evil. Impotence of extravagance and crime.—The Charter, as a result of the legitimate work of the revolution and the eighteenth century.—Difference between the mission of the eighteenth century and that of the nineteenth.

I PRESENTED you the last year an introduction to the history of philosophy : I wished, before all, that you should recognize that which you had heard before with some indulgence ; I wished to designate to you at first my method and my end, the sum of my ideas, and the general spirit which ought to preside over my teaching. But if generalities are the soul of science, I am not ignorant that science takes a body in some sort, is founded and

organized, only in the reality of details and by the work of positive applications. I come, therefore, to elucidate, to extend, to affirm the historical principles which I set forth to you last year, in applying them to a particular epoch, to a great century of the history of philosophy.

I had thought to conduct you into Greece: I had proposed to make you acquainted with that celebrated epoch of ancient philosophy to which two men have attached their names, equal in genius as well as in fame, who, four centuries before our era, fixed forever in the West, one, the fundamental ideas upon which philosophy turns; the other, the form which is suited to it, and which it has kept. Plato and Aristotle are not only great men, they are systems, and systems which have their roots so deep in the nature of the human spirit, and in the nature of things, that we might say with perfect rigor, that human thought has since done nothing else than to go in turn from one to the other, in modifying them and perfecting them, without cessation. They are, you know, my habitual studies; it would have been easy for me to bring them to this chair: I should have loved to pass this year with you between Plato and Aristotle, between Sophocles and Phidias, between Pericles and Alexander. But grave motives have turned me from this design. History is not made solely to satisfy a learned curiosity, or to furnish pictures for the imagination of the artist; it is, above all, a lesson addressed to the future: an earnest man does not engage in the laborious study of the past in order to apprehend in it only that which was, but in order to deduce what ought to be; and a history of philosophy which would be truly philosophical, ought to seek, and end in, a theory. Such is also my aim: with whatever century of the history of philosophy I may entertain you, I have always before my eyes France, and France in the nineteenth century. Now, it has seemed to me that I should go a little too far from our France, in returning as far as to Aristotle and Plato. Without doubt the system of Plato and that of Aristotle contain the immortal elements which belong to the human spirit, which are proper for all



countries and for all centuries ; but the combination of these elements is entirely Greek ; it is two thousand years old, and, in order to discern and rediscover under this ancient form the eternal problems of philosophy, there is demanded a skill in these problems which all the sagacity of the world cannot supply. Besides, to tell you all my thought, I have considered the particular circumstances in which philosophy is found among us, and I have judged that, in these circumstances, to depart from the list of contemporaneous discussion, and to plunge into antiquity, would be to desert my post and the cause of true philosophy. You see why I have decided to remain some time yet in the regions of modern philosophy ; and as in modern times I know of no century nearer our own than the eighteenth, I have taken that for the text of my lectures. I do not dissimulate the difficulties which attend me ; but it is not more my habit to shun difficulties than to search for them. Every century, in retiring from the stage of the world, and more than any other the eighteenth, filled with events so great, leaves after it a long heritage of contrary interests. The eighteenth century has, then, necessarily among us admirers, and ardent and distrustful adversaries : in this debate of opposite passions, philosophical independence would be ill at ease, if it could not find in itself its force and its recompense.

It is one of the principles that I developed to you last year with the greatest care and extent, that the philosophy of a century comes from all the events of which that century is composed, and in order to comprehend well the philosophy of every epoch, it is necessary to study it first in the general civilization which it produced ;\* hence it follows that to give an exact idea of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, not only in France, but in all Europe, in order to enable you to seize its nature and its proper character, I ought to commence by discoursing to you about the eighteenth century and its history, independently of its philosophy. And as I suppose that the history of that century is known

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\* Vol. 1, Lecture 8, *History of Philosophy*.

to you, it will answer my purpose to recall its principal and characteristic traits: this will be the subject of this first lecture.

What is the eighteenth century? what are its relations with the centuries which precede it? in what does it resemble them? in what does it differ from them? It resembles them in that it continues their action; in differs from them in that it develops their action on a greater scale. And what is that action? It is nothing less than the birth of modern history, the rupture of the new times with the ancient times, with the middle age.

That the middle age was one of the greatest epochs of the history of humanity, that it was in its place, that it was necessary and useful, that it was even a progress in comparison with the epochs which preceded it, is an evident fact in the present state of historical science; but it is not less evident that what had been a progress had become an obstacle, and that the middle age, after having replaced classical antiquity, had served its time and deserved to give place to a new era: all this has even no need of being recalled. But I pray you not to forget an important distinction: the middle age is one thing, and Christianity another. Without doubt, Christianity was in the middle age, and produced there every thing good and great that was produced; but it was there under the condition of time. The middle age is the cradle of Christianity; it is not its boundary. Christianity is the foundation of modern civilization; it was necessary that it should go forth from the darkness and the ties of the middle age, in order to develop itself, and bear the fruits which belong to it. When, therefore, I shall speak to you of the middle age and the formidable and sacred power which rules in it, do not suppose that any question is raised in regard to Christianity and the immortal power which has been given it over the world; there is no question raised except in regard to ecclesiastical power become temporal power, and, as such, submitted to the vicissitudes of all the powers of the earth.

Legitimate child of Christianity, the new spirit made its appear-

ance in the world towards the sixteenth century : its final end is to substitute for the middle age a new society ; hence, it was necessary that its first efforts should be directed against the power which ruled over the middle age : hence, the necessity that the first modern revolution should be a religious one. Without doubt, this revolution had its antecedents and its preparations, like all great events, at first in the attempt for a legal reform at the councils of Basle and Constance, then in the affair of the Hussites ; but it was the sixteenth century, it was Germany, it was Luther, which produced it and gave it their name. A little too much accustomed to regard only France, we believe quite willingly that the seventeenth century is a century of stability and repose. It is all an illusion ; the seventeenth century is just as agitated as the sixteenth. In fact, what do you see in the first half of the seventeenth century ? The continuation of the strife between the absolute spiritual power and the spirit of the Reformation. That obstinate strife moved the whole German empire, and ended only with the treaty of Westphalia : that treaty is a solemn avowal that the new spirit has arrived at a state of force with which it is impossible not to reckon. And what is in the second half of the seventeenth century ? still a revolution ; a revolution which continues the first, and gives to it a new face, a political face. The English Revolution is the grand event of the middle and the end of the seventeenth century. Heir of the centuries which had preceded it, the seventeenth century came to finish their work. The sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries had undermined and shook the middle age ; the mission of the eighteenth was to bring it to a close. Hence its essential characteristics.

Two revolutions, the one religious, the other political, fill up the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; but they were only partial revolutions. The religious revolution did not seem to contain the political revolution ; no one then thought of this relation now so manifest, and it was necessary that time should be charged with the task of making it appear ; it was necessary that the Eng-

lish Revolution should go out from Protestantism, in order that the bearing of the first revolution might be perceived. It is clearly seen that this first revolution was not exclusively religious, since its principle had just produced a political revolution; and it should be recognized that the principle of the second was not exclusively political, since it had already produced a religious revolution. It is the logic of history, which, from the two experiments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, joined to each other and combined with each other, drew this hardy generalization, that is, that of the principle of liberty.

Every thing that is partial is local: thus the Protestant Revolution and the English Revolution have not left the strong but bounded positions which they occupied more than a century since, because their principle wants generality. It is only what is general that is adapted to every thing, that, consequently, can apply itself to every thing and expand itself everywhere. The generalization of ideas has for its inevitable effect their propagation and diffusion. These are the two great characteristics of the eighteenth century. Examine it well; you see it subjecting every thing to examination, rendering itself an account of every thing, seeking in all things the most simple elements, that is, aspiring to the highest generalization; and, at the same time, you see it applying without cessation to every thing and everywhere the principles which it has once generalized. Hence in a country the fusion of all classes, the latent principle of future equality; and the fusion of all countries in Europe, the latent principle of the future European unity. This drawing near of classes and of countries already appears in the eighteenth century; it forms there little by little a unity in which European civilization is met and recognized. But this new unity is purely moral, and it has in opposition to it the subsisting wrecks of the ancient unity of the middle age, the laws, the customs, the institutions of ancient times, which must destroy it or be destroyed by it. Now, thus far, civilization has never been vanquished: it was not in the eighteenth century. The middle age then succumbed; the eighteenth century made

it a thing of history : such was the mission of the century which succeeded the seventeenth and the sixteenth ; and this mission determined the spirit of the eighteenth century, with the two characteristics which I have just designated.

Let us rapidly follow the spirit of the eighteenth century in all its great manifestations, political, religious, moral, literary, scientific ; for the philosophy which we are searching for ought to proceed from all these elements.

These are the great political phenomena of the eighteenth century ; it is not I, it is history, that speaks : The feebleness of all the powers that had played the principal part in the middle age, and the arrival upon the stage of the world of new powers unknown to the middle age, that is, the feebleness of the southern powers, and the creation of northern powers. Italy plunges deeper and deeper into its political nullity ; Spain and Portugal gravitate towards it little by little. What has become of the Portuguese marine ? Where are the Portuguese warriors and navigators ? Portugal is no longer any thing but an English colony. Where are the Spanish bands that had taken part in all the great events of preceding centuries ? They perished at Rocroy. Do you not like war as the measure of the power of nations ? Take a measure more pacific, at least in appearance : take the great men, those living images of humanity in each century ; show me the great men which the South of Europe then produced. In searching carefully, I find two men who were wanting neither in talent nor character, and who belong perhaps to history. The first, animated with the new spirit, but not knowing with what nation he has to deal, tries upon that nation an impracticable enterprise : it is therefore necessary for him to use violence, and violence is resolved into impotence : hence, the unfortunate attempts of the energetic Marquis of Pombal. The second, formed in another school and belonging to the ancient spirit, the Cardinal Alberoni, attempted to replace the Pretender on the throne of England, and to overthrow the Regent in France : but already the past was more feeble than the new times : Alberoni succumbed.

and with him every chance of counter-revolution. On the contrary, turn your attention to the North ; a man there puts an empire into the world : the Czar Peter brings upon the stage of Europe Russia, heterodox Russia. Springing out of the wars of the Reformation, the small duchy of Brandenburg is aggrandized and developed into a Protestant and warlike monarchy. One day this monarchy falls into the hands of a man of genius, who, with it, attacks Austria and dismembers the empire. Later comes the emancipation of the American colonies, which adds still to the general dissolution. I do not speak to you of the French Revolution, because that is not one of the events of the eighteenth century, but the event *par excellence* of that century, that entire century, its last term, its crisis ; of it I shall speak hereafter.

Let us consider the religious state of Europe. All the world agree, all the world proclaim, friends and enemies, that the religious character of this time is the weakness of the ecclesiastical power. The European clergy of every quarter not only loses its authority over minds, but it seems itself on the point of abdication : it is less wise, it is less grave ; far from being opposed to the dissolution which saps it and menaces it, it goes in advance of the dissolution, and encourages it. To a Pope *Mahomet* was dedicated. Clement XIV. either did not understand this ironical homage, or lent himself to it with a good grace : he returned for it his thanks. No more can I forget that it was in the middle of the eighteenth century when was disbanded the last military order of the middle age, that society which did so much good and so much evil, and which during two centuries, with a tenacity the very secret of which is its infinite suppleness, defended everywhere the middle age and absolute power, spiritual and temporal, by its knowledge and its intrigues, by its virtues and its vices. It was in the middle of the eighteenth century that this celebrated society perished ; it was laid in the tomb by the very hands of that power which it served and which had instituted it ; and there can no longer return only a powerless phantom of it,

which disappears at the first somewhat severe sign of the new civilization.\*

In morals, the symptoms are the same. With the ancient order of things the old manners, the old virtues,—as if virtue also could change with the times and participate in the vicissitudes of history,—grow feeble and decline. The old virtues depart, for example, the spirit of chivalry, which no longer exists, except in some souls of the *élite*, worthy of all our respect. In place of the ancient virtues, thank God, come new virtues, for example, humanity, word almost new, or the more frequent employment of which marks the extension of the thing, or at least of the idea. Modern humanity has its roots in Christian charity, and very willingly I acknowledge it; but it is the glory of the eighteenth century to have drawn this virtue from Christianity. Humanity in acts, is beneficence; in sentiments, it is benevolence; and as the eighteenth century, which generalizes every thing, at the same time applies every thing, it applies also the principle of humanity to the most usual relations; hence politeness, which is spread among all classes and in all countries. But a void in society and in the human soul is not made with impunity; into this void easily glide skepticism, effeminacy, license: hence the general relaxation of manners in all Europe in the eighteenth century. Thus evil, much evil, is found by the side of good. I designate to you, once for all, this sad and inevitable mixture, and I think myself excused from continually recurring to it; I trust myself to your intelligence, and somewhat also to my known intentions.

Let us follow in literature the spirit of the eighteenth century. If the eighteenth century is a century of dissolution, it will not be a century of poetry, for poetry is the expression, the harmonious voice, and, thus to speak, the flower of a fixed and permanent state of things; this flower cannot bloom in the midst of a crisis; and the eighteenth century is, and can be, only a crisis. Thus in

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\* See on the Jesuits of former times and of the present times, *The Defence of the University and of Philosophy*, 4th edition, pp. 25, 318, 388, etc.

France there is at most one great poet, Voltaire. In England, Dryden, Pope, and Addison are, if it is permitted to say it, as it were the brilliant coinage of Milton and Shakspeare. Italy has two men of talent, Metastasio and Alfieri, who ask nothing more than to be poets; but neither the one with his fine harmony without manly thoughts, nor the other with his convulsive and studied energy, arrives at true poetry. In my opinion, Germany is the asylum of poetry in the eighteenth century. It is sufficient to name Klopstock, Schiller, Goëthe, the first entirely Protestant, the second entirely liberal, the last entirely philosophical. Goëthe is with Voltaire the poet of the eighteenth century. It seems that Goëthe has appeared in the world (and God grant that he may remain a long time yet!) to prove that the most philosophical spirit, the freest reflection, can also have their poetry.

If the eighteenth, among us, is not the century of poetry, it is that of prose. France, at once so methodical and so vivacious, is the country of fine prose. Hence our great prose-writers of the seventeenth century, which those of the eighteenth worthily follow. The sacred eloquence which the elegant Massillon sustains yet a moment is drawing to a close; but in place of this eloquence another arises, which setting up a new chair in France, speaks to all Europe of man, of his nature, of his history, of his rights, of his interests of every kind, paints for him the agitated scenes of moral life or the tranquil and majestic scenes of nature. One may say that all Europe was in the eighteenth century the auditory of France, the auditory of Montesquieu, of Rousseau, of Buffon. It even applauded the pleasantries of Voltaire, because under these pleasantries, which I am far from wishing wholly to vindicate, it felt that its own cause, that is, the cause of humanity, was advocated.

The eighteenth century is not that of the arts. First, in regard to sculpture, it had none. Besides, the seventeenth century had scarcely any. Michael Angelo himself only proved perhaps, by force of genius, the impossibility of a modern sculpture. Sculpture belongs to antiquity, for it is, above all things, the represen-



tation of the beauty of form ; and the interest in, as well as the adoration of beauty of form belong to paganism. On the contrary, painting is wholly in the expression, in the representation, not only of exterior form, but also of the sentiments and of the soul ; not only of physical beauty, but also of moral beauty. Painting is, therefore, eminently modern and Christian ; but it belongs to the middle age, it could not have flourished in the eighteenth century. Boucher and Vander Werf prostitute it to the scenes of the boudoir ; the honest Greuze cuts himself loose from the reigning mode ; and behold the art of Van-Eyck and Raphael employed in painting courtizans for the great lords, and interiors, antechambers, and kitchens for the burghers. Later, wearied with the degradation into which it has fallen, it attempts a false grandeur, and, leaping over the middle age, which is its place, it returns to antiquity, which is the age of sculpture, and then it makes statues instead of paintings ; nearly at the same time sculpture, by the very reason of its impotence, departs also from its limits, and, tormenting the marble, almost coloring it, makes paintings instead of statues. Nevertheless, no one admires more than I Canova and David ; they are not excelled in spirit or in skill : they are very fine artists, perhaps a great statuary and a great painter, but in an age when there could be neither painting nor sculpture.\*

The eighteenth century was more fortunate in music. Music is the art of awakening in the soul a certain number of simple sentiments by sounds combined with each other ; now sound comprises every thing that is most profound, and at the same time most vague :† hence the essentially general character of music. Music, then, is not repugnant to any form of civilization ; it could then flourish in the eighteenth century : but the eighteenth century did not admit (you know why) sacred music ; it replaces it by another music which has scarcely any antecedents in modern

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\* On Sculpture and Painting, see the 1st Series, Vol. 2, Second Part, on the Beautiful, Lectures 15 and 16, p. 194.

† Ibid., on Music, pp. 196-200.

Europe, and which bears the character of the century which created it, a century of life, of movement, and of strife: I mean dramatic music. It is in the eighteenth century that it produces all its marvels; and as this century is that of the diffusion of every thing, the great dramatic compositions which are produced at Naples, at Vienna, or Paris, are spread everywhere instantaneously, penetrate everywhere, descend even to the lowest conditions and the humblest retreats, and thus pour torrents of musical sentiment over all Europe.

It remains for me to speak to you of the sciences. To neglect them would be to forget, with the principal glory of the eighteenth century, that which more particularly bears the imprint of its genius. But time, which hurries me on, warns me to limit myself to a rapid sketch: I will try at least to present to you the fundamental traits of the scientific culture of the eighteenth century.

I divide the scientific culture of the eighteenth century into two parts: first, the sciences which the century enlarged, developed, renewed; secondly, those which it created. Most especially by these last is its character marked.

The seventeenth century, thus to speak, invented mathematics a second time, and carried them to that height which is represented by the names of Descartes, of Newton, of Leibnitz. The eighteenth century can also present with pride, without speaking of Clairault and d'Alembert, the great names of Euler, of Lagrange, and Laplace. Without doubt Tournefort had preceded Linnæus and Jussieu; these so renewed botany that we might say, without being accused of exaggeration, that they created it. It is the same with physiology: it existed before the eighteenth century, but what an immense development it took in the hands of Haller and Bichat! The eighteenth century could be neither the seventeenth nor the sixteenth. Thus, in geography, it could not discover America, the isles of the Southern Archipelago, and the southern shores of Africa; but there are also great navigators as Cook, Bougainville, and d'Entrecasteaux. Was there not also

an intrepid seaman, like our unfortunate La Perouse? You remember the voyage of Maupertuis and La Condamine. To the eighteenth century belong the African Society and Mungo-Park. Finally, on the borders of the eighteenth century and our own, a man who belongs at once to Germany and France, undertook entirely alone an enterprise for which a government would have been hardly sufficient: M. de Humboldt, accompanied by a Frenchman, M. de Bonpland, penetrated into the vast continent of South America; he brought back from that region six thousand new plants; he determined the position of two hundred astronomical points; he made a multitude of experiments which confirmed the discoveries of Europe; he measured the height of Chimborazo. A learned geography reckons Bauche and d'Anville. Astronomy followed mathematics; but it is less in mathematical astronomy than in astronomical observations that the glory of the eighteenth century especially consists. I ought to limit myself to certain results, or rather to certain names, for example, Herschel and Piazzi. To speak only of the end of the century, from 1789 to 1805, seventeen comets were discovered with all their orbits calculated; the inequalities of the planets were developed and estimated, and all this immense movement of observations and calculations ended in the *System of the World* of Laplace. Experimental physics did not remain inferior to astronomical observation: here also great discoveries and great names accumulate to such a degree, that it is necessary to choose from a great number. By a good fortune which does not happen to every one, Galvani finds, without scarcely having searched for it, the action of a metal upon the electricity deposited in the animal economy: immediately a man of genius reproduces the experiments of Galvani, renews his discovery by the precision which he gives to it, and renews it by the consequences which he draws from it, and invents an instrument which plays, thus to speak, with electricity, and augments the force of it almost indefinitely; whilst Franklin reaches in the bosom of the clouds this same electricity, and masters it. It has been said, that the pile of Volta, the maker of the

electrometer, is for the decomposition of bodies, that is, for the profoundest part of experimental physics, what the microscope is for natural history.

Still we can say that in experimental physics the eighteenth century had illustrious precedents. But in the seventeenth century, in the sixteenth, and in all antiquity, where was chemistry? It has no other precedent in reality, as well as in name, than alchemy, which scarcely resembles it. Chemistry is a creation of the eighteenth century, a creation of France. By the example, in the footsteps of Lavoisier, are formed and still proceed the great foreign chemists, here Priestley and Davy, there Klaproth and Berzelius. In mineralogy, so enriched and so developed during the eighteenth century, one sees a new science formed, crystallography, the science which observes and describes the regular figures of crystals, and the laws of their formation. The same age, the same author, said M. Cuvier, have seen the birth of the science and have conducted it to its termination. This man is a Frenchman, his name Haüy. The age which had created crystallography and chemistry, and immensely developed experimental physics, must have created geology; so geology belongs to the eighteenth century: it is due to the labors of Pallas, Deluc, Saussure, and Dolomieu. If we do not cite other names, it is in order not to approach our own times. From these sciences combined has sprung physical geography. Such are the great scientific creations of the eighteenth century.

It left its trace not less upon the moral sciences, by the creation of several, and by the development of all. I can only present to you now the most general results.

Sir William Jones and Anquetil-Duperron opened to erudition a new world; they revealed the East to Europe. Voltaire, it must be acknowledged, imprinted upon history a new character, by demanding of it first of all the picture and the progress of humanity. What are all former publicists compared with Montesquieu? To find his equals it is necessary to go back to Machiavelli, to Plato, and to Aristotle. Montesquieu is the chief of the

political school of the eighteenth century : all enlightened Europe is ranged under his banner.

But let us look at the wholly original creations.

Before the eighteenth century private persons, governments, nations, had enriched themselves ; they had done it to the best of their ability and far as possible, but without rendering to themselves an account of the processes which they could not help blindly following. In the eighteenth century, not only general wealth increases, but the spirit of reflection and analysis searches out the causes of wealth, the processes which produce it, increase it, or lessen it. Hence political economy, a science entirely new, half-French, half-English.\*

Before the eighteenth century the human spirit had felt beauty, had admired it in the works of nature, had admired it in its own works, but without reducing to a system the motives of its emotion in the presence of beauty and the characteristics of this beauty. It was not the eighteenth century, without doubt, which first raised this question : What is beauty ? but it was that which in dividing it, and subdividing, deduced from it a regular science which has its principles, its separate culture, its progress. The eighteenth century produced elevated criticism, *aesthetics*, as it is called in Germany, which, though not its inventor, carried it so far.†

Previous to the eighteenth century families and public institutions had brought up to the best of their ability the rising generations ; but no one had thought of bringing reflection and method to the aid of instruction, and education was abandoned to routine. The eighteenth century, which submitted every thing to examination, made of education at first a problem, then a science, then an art ; hence pedagogy : the word is perhaps a little ridiculous ; the thing represented is sacred.

\* See 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lecture 16, on Smith.

† On *Aesthetics*, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, 2d Part, on the Beautiful, and Vol. 4, Lecture 13, *Hutchinson, Aesthetics*.

Such is nearly the inventory of the eighteenth century. If you study attentively this century, you will recognize on every thing that it created, as well as on all the new developments which it added to that which the preceding centuries had bequeathed to it, the impress of the same character. The spirit of the eighteenth century demands an account of every thing, penetrates to the most intimate elements of things, of beings, of questions, of facts; stops only when it has arrived at the most simple elements, at the elements which it finds indecomposable. Now, to experiment thus, to decompose, to analyze, is to dissolve. This is not a resemblance of expression; the identity is in the thing; and this identity springs again from the compared examination of sciences, of arts, of literature, of morals, of religion, and of politics, during the whole extent of the century.

It simply remains to me to draw from all these antecedents the consequences which they contain, or rather to remind you how history is charged with the task of drawing them.

It is necessary to distinguish in the eighteenth century the first half, in which the work of the century was done, but noiselessly, in an occult and unperceived manner, from the second half, in which this work was done with *éclat*. The last quarter of the eighteenth century was so rich in productions of every kind, that we might say that not only each year, but each month produced its discovery, and added to the fecundity and power of the new spirit. When we follow attentively in all things the progress of this spirit towards 1789, we are struck with the impossibility that a work so ardent and so vast, increasing always by its very effects, should not at last produce an explosion. Hence the necessity of a great event into which the eighteenth century should resolve itself. But where should that great event take place? It could not be in England, for, in the first place, England had paid its debt to the spirit of revolutions; and then, it was necessary that it should bring the middle age to a close by generalizing the principle of the new spirit, and England generalizes very little; in fine, England is an island which has its part in the des-

times of the world, but which does not play upon the European continent the principal part. Germany was better fitted for it by its power of generalization ; but it had accomplished the revolution which belonged to it, the revolution in the interior world of thought, in religion. Besides, its language was scarcely known at that epoch ; it had no literary power, no authority in civilization ; it must be said, the Germans fifty years ago seemed to us still somewhat barbarous. There was a nation, placed in the centre of the European continent, contiguous to all other nations, and able to reach, in a few days, all the extremities of Europe ; a nation endowed in the highest degree with the spirit of generalization, and which, to this rare faculty of generalizing every thing, joins the necessity of applying every thing ; a nation which, by its sociability, I was almost going to say with everybody, the amiability of its character and its commerce, by the universality of its language and the power of its literature, was able to manage with success the business of the new spirit ; a nation, in fine, which, in case of need, could defend it with its sword. For all these reasons, the future revolution fell to the lot of France. Do not forget that France had not yet served on a great scale the cause of the new civilization ; the part which belonged to it was the accomplishment of the last act of this great drama. Add that the French nation is the only historical nation of the eighteenth century ; its character is precisely that of this century ; it represented it then in Europe as it will represent it in history. From France had gone forth all the voices that had moved Europe ; in France was principally accomplished the great scientific and literary work of the century ; for, France either produced herself the greatest part of the creations of the eighteenth century, or she appropriated them by promptly naturalizing them at home ; and they necessarily passed through France to make the tour of Europe. The nation capable of producing the inevitable event was therefore given, and in France should have taken place that great event which, from one end of the world to the other, is called the French Revolution. Yes, without doubt it is French,

but it is European also: all the civilized nations of Europe had a hand in it, for all prepared it by their participation in the general work which produced it, and all applauded it.

What are the characteristics of this revolution? At first sight, it is thought to be only a political revolution; but it is also evidently a religious revolution. Was it only a religious and political revolution? It would then have been only a revolution of the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries; but it was necessary that it should be a revolution of the eighteenth century, that is, a general revolution. If it had not been general, it would have failed of its mission; for all partial revolutions had been made, and all partial revolutions, being consummated, pushed on to a general revolution. Moreover, as generalization is the element itself of propagation and diffusion, the French Revolution, in generalizing the principle of liberty, bore it everywhere: it bore it into the different classes of French society which it had brought nearer together, hence equality; it bore it home to the various nations of Europe by a thousand means; and of these means, the most efficacious, after printing, was war, according to what I said to you last year;\* the French sword opened the road in Europe for liberty and French equality.

That revolution was truly general; upon the ruins of the past it implanted everywhere its principles both in France and in Europe. But did it escape the law of all great overthrows? did it renew the world without violence? was it violent without extravagance? was it extravagant without being criminal? No, for no revolution has been able to escape that sad law. When we shall thoroughly understand the details of the Protestant Reformation, we shall see that these details are far from being beautiful. You know the horrible excesses, the crimes till then unheard of, that made bloody and defiled the English Revolution. The French Revolution, which came to accomplish the work of preceding revolutions, and bore in its bosom the accumulated

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\* Vol. 1st, Lecture 9, *Nations*.



storms of two centuries, which was to be so general and so radical that it should render in our age any new revolution impossible, the French Revolution was to surpass in violence the preceding revolutions as it surpassed them in grandeur, and to express, in some sort, all the ferocity of the revolutions which it anticipated and which it prevented.

History mentions not only the good, it mentions also the evil; this is its duty; but it ought not to smother the good under a picture of the evil: I return then the extravagances to the extravagant, the crimes to the criminals, and I turn my eyes away from this blood and this filth. Nevertheless, I wish to draw from it a lesson which morality borrows from history. To good alone have been given constancy, perpetuity, duration; evil is only a negation, a negation which in some sort attempts to be, without arriving at, a veritable existence: scarcely consummated, it dissipates itself immediately into the very extravagance of confusion. Among the punishments of crime, which are never wanting to it, by the side of that which conscience inflicts upon it, history inflicts upon it still another, both clear and manifest—impotence. Confounding what it was necessary to distinguish, they laid, in their delirium, a sacrilegious hand on the very foundations of modern society, Christianity and royalty. What was the result of these extravagances and these crimes? A few years passed away, Christianity and royalty were again raised, more pure, more powerful, more revered.

I might say to the blind partisans of the eighteenth century: Choose among any of its theories, any of its acts, and the irresistible evidence of facts, the unanswerable authority of events sufficiently numerous, sufficiently prolonged, to enable one to see the very force and nature of things, the law of history, the judgment of Providence. Every thing was not so lawful and holy in the theories and the acts of the revolution, since of many of these theories and these acts there remains only a horrible remembrance. On the other hand, to the blind adversaries of the eighteenth century and of the great event which offers itself to

them under such frightful colors, I might propose this dilemma, which contains the summary of this lecture : Leave there, I would say to them, the excesses which are revolting to you, and which are revolting to me as much as to you : consider in the French Revolution its principles and its results, and then, either absolve the French Revolution, or condemn the whole age which it represents ; either absolve the eighteenth century, or condemn the seventeenth, for the eighteenth is only the continuation of the seventeenth ; either absolve the seventeenth century, or condemn the sixteenth, which prepared it ; finally, either absolve the sixteenth century, or attach yourselves to the middle age ; condemn the march and the progress of modern civilization, defend absolute immobility, oppose yourselves to history, oppose yourselves to the designs of Providence.

Besides, a higher authority has solved the question ; that authority which made the Charter passed a peremptory judgment upon the eighteenth century : it discriminated between the good and the evil ; it condemned what was condemnable, it consecrated what was legitimate. Every charter, every constitution, is only an historical *résumé* ; it is the recognition of all the essential elements of an epoch : now, the Charter recognized and placed in the first rank Christianity and royalty, which now, thanks to God, are each day taking new forces, new accessions ; and for this reason the Charter confounded more than one vain theory, more than one criminal enterprise. But, at the same time, the Charter vindicated the principles and general results of the French Revolution and the eighteenth century. It not only vindicated the eighteenth century, but in vindicating that, it vindicated the two centuries which preceded and prepared it. The religious revolution of the sixteenth century was recognized and aggrandized in the Charter by the article which guarantied liberty of worship ; the political revolution of the seventeenth century was expressed in it by the introduction of a representative branch in the government of the king, and the participation of the country in the affairs of the country. The forms and even

the language of the representative government of England of 1688 passed into the French Charter of 1814. You see how the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were recognized: as to the eighteenth, the equality which had been engendered in it by the diffusion of the general principle of liberty was consecrated by the article which recognizes all the French as accessible to all employments, and which established the true equality, the only possible and legitimate equality, equality before the law; in fine, the general principle of liberty was consecrated by the liberty of the press. What, in fact, is the liberty of the press, if not the unlimited liberty of reasoning, the right of examination in its entire range, that is, the principle of liberty in its highest generality, that is, again, the entire eighteenth century? Thus the Charter itself adopted the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, the political revolution of the seventeenth, and the great revolution of the eighteenth. The last result of the conquests of humanity, it represents them, and protects them. Behind this authority I place both my wishes for the future and my opinion upon the past, and all my instruction.\*

In the last analysis, every thing being examined and weighed, the good being equitably separated from the evil, it seems to me, and I do not hesitate to conclude, with my two honorable colleagues and friends, M. Guizot and M. Villemain, that the eighteenth century is one of the greatest centuries that have appeared in the world. The mission which history imposed upon it was, that it should bring the middle age to a close; it fulfilled that tragic mission; it fulfilled only that: a century, a single century, is rarely charged with two missions at once; it destroyed, it produced nothing: it could do no more. Over the abyss of the immense revolution which it opened and which it closed, the eighteenth century left scarcely any thing but abstractions; but these abstractions are the immortal verities which contain the future. The nineteenth century has collected them again; its mission is

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\* See a more detailed analysis of the Charter, Vol. 1st, Lecture 18.

to realize them in impressing on them a vigorous organization. This new-born organization is the Charter, for which Europe is indebted to France, for which France is indebted to the noble dynasty which marches at her head. The work of the nineteenth century ought to be on the Charter and about the Charter. More fortunate than our fathers, who were born among the storms which are already far from us, let us not blindly adore, let us not ungratefully outrage, the great century which has just come to a close, and which, with its blood and its tears, opened for us the road to the peaceable liberty which we enjoy. Let us study it with discernment and equity, in order to draw from it salutary lessons ; let us honor it, let us not continue it. Let us imitate it only in serving like it, but in a different manner, the same cause, that of liberty and civilization.

## LECTURE II.

## CHARACTER OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

**Subject of this Lecture:** Character of the philosophy of the eighteenth century.—Of the character of philosophy in general. Of religion and philosophy; their common foundation, their different processes; the one resting upon authority, the other independent.—History: that in history every distinction is opposition.—The East.—Greece.—Middle Age. Sixteenth century: revivification of the independence of reason, the revolution which produced modern philosophy.—Seventeenth century: it constitutes modern philosophy: Bacon, Descartes.—Eighteenth century: it expands it and makes of philosophy a power.—Its evil: its good.—Difference between the philosophical mission of the eighteenth century and that of the nineteenth.

You understand the general character of the eighteenth century: we have considered it in all the religious, moral, political, military, literary, and scientific elements of which the century is composed, philosophy excepted. It is our business now to recognize philosophy: I propose to designate for you its general character. Now, every century has its peculiarity, and the philosophy of the eighteenth century can only reflect the spirit of the century to which it belongs. Thus its mission is the same, its character the same, its destiny the same; and this second lecture can be only a counter-proof of the first.

What is the philosophy of the eighteenth century? What are the relations of the philosophy of the eighteenth century with that of the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries? In what does it resemble it? in what does it differ from it? It resembles it in that it continues it; it differs from it in that it develops it on a larger scale. And what is this philosophical movement, which, starting from the sixteenth century, fills and measures with its progress the seventeenth and eighteenth? Before every thing, what is its

end? It is nothing less than the birth of modern philosophy properly so called, and the dissolution of the middle age in philosophy. Without doubt, this movement had its immediate causes in the general enfranchisement of civilization in the sixteenth century; but it held more profoundly still to the nature itself of the human spirit, and to the laws which preside over its development; the necessary laws, which already, in the course of centuries, had produced analogous phenomena, and which renewed them, in the sixteenth century, with the return of the same circumstances, ennobled by all the superiority of the new times over the ancient times. What are, then, these laws, what are the philosophical movements which they produced, and which terminated in the great movement which embraces the last three centuries? That is what I must commence by establishing.

There are in the human mind two real moments, one as real as the other, which are distinct from each other, and which succeed each other. When intelligence is awakened with the powers which belong to it, it attains at first to all essential verities, which it perceives confusedly, but so much the more vividly. There can be here no question in regard to the process of reasoning; for we do not begin by that, and it is very evident that the process of reasoning is an operation which presupposes several others. Our faculty, at once primordial and permanent, is reason. It enters at first into exercise, and develops itself immediately and spontaneously. The spontaneous action of reason in its greatest energy is inspiration. Inspiration, daughter of the soul and heaven, speaks from on high with an absolute authority; it commands faith; so all its words are hymns, and its natural language is poetry. But inspiration does not proceed entirely alone; the senses, the imagination, the heart, are mixed with primitive intuitions, with the immediate illuminations of reason, and tinge it with their colors. Hence a complex result, in which the great truths revealed by inspiration rule, but under those forms full of simplicity, grandeur, and enchantment, which the senses and the imagination borrow from external nature, in order to clothe reason

with them. Such is the first step of intelligence. But after it is developed in a manner entirely spontaneous, without consciousness of itself, at the same time with imagination and sensibility, it will at some period return upon itself, and distinguish itself from all the other faculties with which it had at first been mixed. In distinguishing itself from them, it becomes conscious of itself : in the confused picture of the primitive operation, it discerns the traits which are its own, and it perceives that every thing true in the picture belongs to itself. It acquires thus, little by little, confidence in itself, and instead of allowing itself to be ruled over and enveloped by the other faculties, it separates itself from them more and more, it judges them, subjects them to its own surveillance and control. Then, interrogating itself more profoundly still, it demands of itself what it is, what is its nature, what are its laws, what is the bearing of these laws, what are their limits, what are their legitimate applications ? This is the work of reflection. Let us see what its character is. Inspiration is not premeditated, and, primitively, reason applies itself without having wished to apply itself, by the virtue that is in it : but in reflection intervenes volition ; no one reflects who does not wish to reflect ; and reflection, being entirely voluntary, is entirely personal. Now, as in the spontaneous intuition of the reason, there is nothing voluntary, and consequently personal, as the truths which reason discovers to us come not from us, we believe that we have the right to impose them upon others, since they are not our work, and since we bow before them ourselves, as coming from on high ; while, on the contrary, reason being entirely personal, it would be very evidently unjust and absurd to impose upon others the fruit of the operations which belong to us. No one reflects for another ; and even though the reflection of one man adopts the results of the reflection of another man, it adopts them only after having appropriated them, and rendered them its own. Thus the prominent character of inspiration,—impersonality, contains the principle of authority ; and the character of reflection,—personality, contains the principle of independence.

They are, as I have often proved in other places,\* the two fundamental momenta of thought and its development; they are its two essential forms. We have become acquainted with the characteristics of each one of these. Nevertheless, what name is usually given them? What are the popular names of spontaneity and reflection? They are called religion and philosophy.

Religion and philosophy are, then, the two great facts of human thought. These two facts are real and incontestable; they are distinct from each other; they succeed each other in the order which I have designated: religion precedes, then comes philosophy. As religion supposes spontaneous intuition, so philosophy has religion for its basis; but upon this basis it is developed in an original manner. Turn your attention to history, that living image of thought: everywhere you perceive religions and philosophies; everywhere you see them distinct; everywhere you see them produced in an invariable order; everywhere religion appears with new societies, and everywhere, just so far as societies increase, from religion springs philosophy.

Inasmuch as religion and philosophy represent in history two distinct and successive momenta of the same thought, it seems that they might be distinguished from each other, and succeed each other in history as peaceably as in thought. For example, it seems that religion, like a good mother, should cheerfully consent to the emancipation of philosophy, when that becomes of age; and that, on its part, philosophy, like a grateful child, in demanding its rights and in using them, should be, thus to speak, in search of veneration and of deference towards religion. Such is not the case. History attests that every thing which is distinct in thought manifests itself, on this theatre of time and of movement, by an opposition which manifests itself in a violent manner. I am not the maker of this law; I deduce it from all the experiences of history. In fact, everywhere you see religion at-

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\* In this same Series, Vol. 1, Lecture 1, and Lecture 6, 1st Series, *passim*, and particularly Vol. 2, Lectures 9 and 10, p. 99, and the note.



tempting to prolong the infancy of philosophy, and to retain it in tutelage; and everywhere, too, you see philosophy revolting against religion, and rending the bosom which nourished it. In the soul of a true philosopher, religion and philosophy are united without being confounded, and are distinguished without excluding each other, as the two momenta of the same thought. But in history all is combat, all is war:\* nothing is brought forth, nothing begins to appear, except in the midst of storms, blood, and tears. Religion always gives birth to philosophy, but it gives birth to it only in pain; philosophy always succeeds religion, but it succeeds it in a crisis, more or less extended, more or less violent, from which the eternal laws of the development of thought have willed that philosophy should come forth victorious.

Turn your attention to the East: the East is the native land of religions. Yes, without doubt; but either the laws of intelligence will have been suspended in the East, or in that native land of religion, reflection also will have had its rights, and philosophy its place. The history of the East is profoundly obscure; nevertheless, among its uncertain traditions, we hear the report of great wars which have taken place, here, in Egypt and Persia, between the priests and the kings; there, in India, between the Schatrians and the Brahmins, the race of warriors and the sacerdotal race. Besides these great results which are revealed through the clouds which surround the East, you find this other incontestable fact, that, at first, in India, the authority of the Vedas was absolute, and that, afterwards, the Vedas led to an explanation, religious still, but already philosophical, to wit, to the Vedan philosophy, that is, a philosophy founded upon the Vedas. And this is not the last term of philosophy in India. At certain epochs, indeterminate, it is true, for there is no chronology in India, in the retinue, or by the side of the Vedan philosophy, appeared a great number of different philosophies, among others, the Sankhya philosophy, the author of which is Kapila; a philosophy, the avowed char-

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\* Vol. 1, Lectures 6 and 9.

acter and the first precept of which is the rejection of the Vedas.\*

The experience of the East, however obscure in its circumstances, is nevertheless not doubtful as to the fundamental point, the distinction of two momenta in thought, and their representation in religion and philosophy. But the second experience of history is conclusive in a very different sense; it is as clear in its least details as decisive in its results: I mean the Greek† experience, if it is permitted thus to speak; for history is a collection of experiences in which we may study the laws of human thought. What do you see in the cradle of Greece? Religions, very likely originating from the East, which expand themselves over the territory, vivify it, preside over the formation of cities, of arts, of governments, and fill up the fabulous and heroic centuries of Greece. Soon a little reflection is awakened, and there is made a kind of compromise between the authority of popular forms of religion and the nascent need of reflection; hence the mysteries. The mysteries are the passage from religion to philosophy; soon this passage is opened; the initiations, which we can well suppose to have been rare, discreet, submitted to severe conditions, no longer suffice, and in place of a certain number of the initiated there arises a race of new men who are called philosophers. Philosophers! it is the genius of Greece which gave this word to the world. Philosophers, that is, men who do not believe themselves wise, but who would love to be wise; men who do not pretend to have found truth, but who profess to search for it; are free searchers for truth, and for nothing else. That pretension was modest: was it accepted? and what, in Greece, was the fate of these free searchers for truth? Lest any one might plead the barbarism of the times, I will conduct you first to Athens, and to Athens in the time of its greatest democratic liberty, and of its most flourishing civilization, between Pericles and Alexander.

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\* On the Indian Philosophy, see further on, Lectures 5 and 6.

† Further on, Lectures 7 and 8, on Grecian Philosophy.

What was the lot of philosophy there? You know what it was, and I will be brief. The tears, the public tears of Pericles, the dictator of Athens, the conqueror of Eubœa, of him who had decided so many times peace and war, were necessary in order to save a feeble woman, Aspasia, suspected of philosophy. But all the eloquence of Pericles could not save his master and friend, Anaxagoras. Anaxagoras was condemned to a prison, which he changed in his old age only for perpetual exile. What, then, did Anaxagoras teach? He taught, and was the first, if not in the human race which precedes philosophy, at least in the school and among the learned, to establish that the first cause of the visible phenomena of this world is an intelligent cause, an all-powerful intelligence, which possesses the beginning of movement. You know the destiny of Socrates. I will not recall it for you; I pray you only not to forget that the sacrifice of Socrates is so much the more sublime because he knew that he was going to certain death. But what you do not know perhaps so well, is, that after the death of Alexander, Aristotle himself, the father of natural history, the father of logic and regular metaphysics, Aristotle, loaded with years of glory, had all the difficulty in the world to save his head; *postico evasit*, said Cicero: he had barely time to fly in a stealthy manner, and he took refuge at Chalcis, in order to spare the Athenians, said he, a new crime against philosophy. And, furthermore, what was his end? I do not wish to take part myself in this obscure question, but, in fact, one of the most sagacious and circumspect of critics, the learned Tennemann, is inclined to believe that this great man, old, and weary with persecution, poisoned himself at Chalcis. As for Plato, he had only some political adventures; but he was thrown twice into prison, and was once sold as a slave. At such a price philosophy was founded in Greece, and conquered in civilization an independent place.

Christianity is the last religion which has appeared upon the earth; it is the end of the religious movements of the world, and with it all religion is consummated. In fact, Christianity, so little

studied, so little understood, is nothing less than the summing up and crown of the two great religious systems which reigned by turn in the East and in Greece. The religion of a God made man, on one side, elevates the soul towards heaven, and at the same time teaches him that his duties are in this world. The religion of the *man-God* gives an infinite price to humanity. Humanity is then something very great, because it has been chosen as the receptacle and the image of God. Christianity is also a religion eminently human, eminently social. Do you ask proof of this? What has been the result of Christianity and Christian society? Modern liberty, representative governments. Turn your eyes away from and beyond Christianity: for twenty centuries past, what have all other religions produced? What have the Brahmin religion, the Buddhist religion, the Mussulman religion, and all other religions which still reign upon the earth, produced? A profound degradation and a tyranny without bounds. Far from this, Christian Europe is the cradle of liberty; and if it were here the place and time, I could demonstrate to you that Christianity, which in fact produced representative governments, was alone able to produce that admirable form of government which identifies order and liberty. It is also Christianity which, after having preserved the depository of arts, of letters, of sciences, gave them a powerful impulse. Christianity is the root of modern philosophy. Every epoch has its peculiarity; there is a general relation between the general philosophy of a period and the religion of a period. Thus, the Greek philosophy, the philosophy of Aristotle, and even that of Plato, is at foundation a pagan philosophy; and modern philosophy is essentially the child of a Christian society. I then profess to believe that the great truths which modern philosophy, under the forms which are appropriate to it, has developed and will further develop, are so far from being opposed to the truths which Christianity contains, that, on the contrary, in my opinion, all true philosophy is, in germ, in Christian mysteries. But Christianity is a religion and not a philosophy. Now, either the laws of the human mind

ought to have been suspended, or it was necessary that upon the very basis of Christianity a philosophy should be raised which, whatever might be the foundation of its principles, should have a perfect independence. It was necessary that Christianity should give birth to philosophy; but in the middle age, as before the middle age, religion gave birth to philosophy only in pain. Hence the philosophical revolution which commenced with the sixteenth century, and which embraced the seventeenth and the eighteenth. In order to understand well that revolution, it is necessary to have before us the principal circumstances. That the theological teaching of the middle age\* might arrive at that regularity which alone could maintain and expand, with the unity of faith, the ecclesiastical domination, that teaching must have had a method, a fixed form. But what form could the theological teaching of the middle age take? At first, Plato was little understood; he was scarcely known except by the quotations of Macrobius and through the neoplatonism of Denys the Areopagite, which had passed into Scot Erigenus.† It was not possible then to apply to theological teaching the form of a philosophy which was not understood. Besides, what is the Platonic method? It is nothing less than the method of induction. Socrates pretends that each one may know even what he does not believe that he knows; he undertakes to make the mind go from the point where it is, to a point where it is not yet; he makes it pass from the known to the unknown, from the particular to the general, by the force of an analogy which at first is only a resemblance, then becomes a probability, and finally resolves itself into certitude. The *μαστυρία*, the art of accouching minds, is nothing else than induction. Induction is not a new method; it belongs not to

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\* On the philosophy of the middle age, see further on, Lecture 9th, the *Introduction* to the unedited works of Abelard, and the volume of *Fragments* devoted to the Scholastic Philosophy.

† This is true in general, but Plato was somewhat better known even in the twelfth century, than is here said. See the Appendix of Abelard, Nos. v. and vi.

Bacon, not even to Plato; it belongs to the human mind, of which Plato, like Bacon, was one of the great interpreters. It belongs to induction to reduce every thing to a problem, to examine well the point from which the truth, however small, which is accorded to it starts, for the purpose of deducing the truth which is not accorded to it, and which the first contains. The method of induction is essentially vivifying; it is in the highest degree a method of examination. We must add that it is much more a method of discovery than a method of exposition, and that it lends itself very little to teaching. Authority at first did not reject that method, for it did not understand it; but it is in the nature of every thing to aspire to the form which is its own, and the inductive form was not that which was adapted to theological teaching in the middle age. Aristotle was much more known than Plato; it is true that, in the beginning and up to the thirteenth century, the author of natural history and metaphysics was not understood; the author of the *Organum* was understood. And the *Organum* is a collection of rules which teach how to draw from a principle, whatever it may be, its consequences, according to a given mode. The object of the *Organum* is the regularity of deduction. The Platonic induction engenders dialectics; the peripatetic engenders logic properly so called; and the principle of all logic is not to question premises. Moreover, logical exposition is well adapted to teaching, and every professor inclines to it. The reign of the peripatetic form applied to religious teaching is scholasticism. I am far from despising scholasticism; I prize it greatly, by the example of Leibnitz, who said that he found gold in it. It is impossible to have more spirit than the scholastics, to display more resources in argumentation, more of that ingenious analysis which divides and subdivides, more of that powerful synthesis which classifies and reduces to order. Few names deserve to be pronounced with more respect than that of the Angel of the schools, St. Thomas of Aquin, whose work, the celebrated *Summation*, in regard to its form, is one of the masterpieces of the human mind.

But what is the character of this masterpiece and of the other works which scholasticism produced? The character of scholasticism is that of being confined in a circle, of moving, it is true, of even questioning in this circle, but without passing beyond it. Authority imposed upon you the premises and it drew the conclusions, but you could take whatever road you chose from the premises to the conclusions. Such is scholasticism. It was certainly not the true representation of free reflection; and if this momentum of thought was necessary, it must have had sooner or later its representation in our modern Europe. Scholasticism had been, like the pagan initiations, a useful compromise between the principle of authority and the philosophic form; it had been at first a satisfaction granted to the spirit of reflection, and then had become an obstacle to it: it became necessary, therefore, that an independent philosophy should succeed scholasticism. It commenced with the sixteenth century, increased with the seventeenth, and triumphed with the eighteenth. The sixteenth century is the commencement of the philosophical revolution, feeble indeed, at once ardent and blind, like every thing that is beginning; the seventeenth establishes it and gives it regularity, the eighteenth generalizes and expands it. Such are the three periods of revolution which produced modern philosophy. Let us rapidly run over them.

You must judge rightly in regard to the position of the new spirit in the sixteenth century.\* At bottom, it was a spirit of independence; consequently it had for its adversary the opposite, the principle of authority: understand me well, I speak of the principle of authority, not in matters of faith and in the domain of theology, where authority has its legitimate place, but in the domain of philosophy, where free reflection ought to reign. Authority and liberty are the two real adversaries which are at war in the sixteenth century; but between these two adversaries is found peripateticism. Peripateticism was the form of the prin-

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\* On the *Philosophy of Regeneration*, see further on, Lecture 10.

ciple of authority, and the principle of liberty could combat the principle of authority only through peripateticism. You see why in the sixteenth century all the blows fell upon peripateticism and scholasticism. It is an incontestable fact, which springs from the entire history of the sixteenth century, that the most distinguished thinkers of this century were antiperipatetics and more or less platonists. Platonism, which some now wish to give us as a retrograde philosophy, was the instrument of the reformers of philosophy in the sixteenth century. As I have said, every nascent revolution is necessarily feeble, and it increases this feebleness through its own inconsiderate ardor, its own fury, its own excesses. It must not be expected that every thing was pure in the philosophical revolution of the sixteenth century. It seems that the human spirit had then some reprisals to make, that revolt was for it, as it were, a trial of its powers, and that it felt sure of its independence only when it had pushed it to extravagance. The new spirit not only opposed Plato to Aristotle; certainly the two adversaries would have been well matched: no: against Aristotle it inconsiderately asked arms from all the ancient systems of Greek philosophy, which the Greeks, driven from Constantinople, began to resuscitate in Europe; thus among the reformers, one embraced epicureanism, another an insane pythagorianism, and most a platonism without criticism. Their inexperience, their zeal, their misfortunes, ought to inspire a profound indulgence for their opinions, and a lively interest for their destiny. If no one of them raised an enduring monument, it must not be forgotten, even in the midst of their saddest aberrations, that they were the fathers, the courageous and unfortunate promoters of liberty of thought.

The sixteenth century was for the philosophical reformation what the fifth century was for the religious reformation; a century of necessary, but unfruitful preparations; Campanella, Vanini, Ramus, Bruno, are, as it were, the Hussites of philosophy. The philosophical movement of the sixteenth century had been a blind attack upon the principle of authority, under the form of scho-



lasticism; and the sixteenth century had succumbed. The seventeenth century renewed the strife, but gave to it regularity; and, thanks to progress, both of times and things, it carried away, and so thoroughly destroyed scholasticism, that henceforth there was no longer any question concerning it.\*

The two men who are at the head of this second regular movement of the philosophical revolution are Bacon and Descartes. It is not necessary to dwell upon the difference of their systems, or even upon the difference of their methods: nothing concerns us here but the war which they waged upon scholasticism, and their common appeal to the spirit of independence. In this respect there is perfect unity between Bacon and Descartes. But Bacon did not at first make a great noise in Europe; his glory and his influence did not go beyond England. Besides, Bacon made no discovery which attracted the attention of the learned: he did little more than to reduce to rules, admirable for their grandeur and conciseness, the Italian practice.† It was a century later when the name and writings of Bacon became European. The real philosophical hero of the seventeenth century is our Descartes. Descartes renewed the strife of the sixteenth century; he brought to his task, besides an unconquerable firmness, a sagacity and a good sense which preserved the new philosophy from that appearance of extravagance which had brought into disrepute all the disorderly and irregular attempts of the sixteenth century. Then the philosophical reformers of the sixteenth century, much less than Bacon, had not made any discovery which had been of any use to humanity, and which had taken rank in science; but Descartes was indisputably the first geometrician of his times, and was a very great physical philosopher, even before Galileo. Hence, among other reasons, the splendor of his philosophy and his method which authorized marvellously the great and certain results upon which they rested.

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\* On the philosophy of the seventeenth century, see further on, Lectures 11 and 12, and especially the *Fragments of Cartesian Philosophy*.

† *Fragments of Cartesian Philosophy, Preface, p. 7.*

But that which is much above his philosophy, above even his method, is the character itself of his method and his philosophy, to wit, an independence without bounds. Descartes demanded the independence of philosophy with an audacity which is sufficiently celebrated, and of which I have spoken more than once; I wish now to speak to you of another quality of Descartes which is somewhat less celebrated, I mean his prudence. Descartes comprehended that the nascent revolution of the sixteenth century, which he continued, had been frustrated, at first through default of genius and good sense on the part of those who sustained it, and then because, in their blind zeal, the innovators had mixed with the question of philosophical independence several foreign questions, and therefore had raised storms which overwhelmed them. Descartes joined great spirit to great genius; he had been a man of the world, he knew his century and the men of this century; he understood the necessity of great circumspection: read his letters; he recommended to all his friends, to all his pupils, moderation and prudence. He himself, after his first and immortal work written in French, *De la Méthode*, had produced an immense effect, had raised on every side, together with curiosity, malevolence and great scruples, wisely dedicated his *Meditations* to the Sorbonne. Do you wish another very strong and little known proof of the prudence, often extreme, of Descartes? He meditated like Galileo on the motion of the earth; he believed that he had absolutely demonstrated it; but, at the news of the condemnation of Galileo, he did not hesitate to suppress this opinion and the entire work which contained it.\* Thus Descartes escaped persecutions; but, notwithstanding all his sagacity, he did not escape from stratagems. After having run round the world much, after having studied men on a thousand occasions, on the field of battle and at court, he had concluded that he must live a recluse; he became a hermit in Holland. Well! there even he found stratagems; and from

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\* *Fragments of the Cartesian Philosophy*, p. 207, and the note.

what side? No longer from the side of the Jesuits and P. Bourdin, but from the side of the Protestants, from the side of a Calvinistic theologian who claimed liberty in opposing Rome and exercised tyranny towards philosophy.

For many reasons which it would require too much time to develop to you, the result of the Cartesian revolution was the radical destruction of the peripatetic form of scholasticism. Descartes penetrated into the celebrated society of Port-Royal, and his influence was felt by the learned clergy. Arnauld\* and Pascal,† Fenelon and Bossuet,‡ were Cartesians, as well as Malebranche. More and Clark introduced Cartesianism into England, Spinoza and Clauberg into Holland, Leibnitz into Germany. Italy and Spain played at that time no part in philosophy. The French literature of the seventeenth century, so powerful in Europe, propagated the Cartesian spirit, and towards the year seventeen hundred this spirit was dominant among the aristocracy of thinkers in Europe. Scholasticism no longer even defended itself; you have only to open the works of philosophy which appeared at the commencement of the seventeenth century, to see that the question of scholasticism is scarcely raised any more; one hardly finds even a feeble echo of the wrath or arguments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against it; in fine, we may say that, at the beginning of the second half of the eighteenth century, the second movement of the philosophical revolution was accomplished.

Let us see what the eighteenth century did for this revolution. Its mission was greater than that of the seventeenth century. It was to continue the action of the preceding century, but to develop it on a vaster plan. It did that; the eighteenth century

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\* On Arnauld, as a philosopher, *The Thoughts of Pascal*, *PASSIM*, especially the preface of the 8d edition, p. 52.

† Hear Pascal, before an outlandish Jansenism had thrown him into skepticism. See further on, Lecture 12 and my work,—*Des Pensées de Pascal*.

‡ *The Thoughts of Pascal*, PREFACE, *Fragments of the Cartesian Philosophy*, *PASSIM*.

did in philosophy what it did in every thing else. Scholasticism, having been beaten down, the principle of Cartesianism, the spirit of independence, found itself face to face with the principle of authority without any intervention. The definitive triumph of the spirit of independence,—such was the mission, and such the work of the eighteenth century. It generalized the principle of the Cartesian revolution, and raised it to its highest elevation; moreover, it propagated, expanded this principle, at first in all classes of society, and then in all the countries of Europe. In order to recognize the generalization of the principle of philosophical independence in the eighteenth century, it is sufficient to open the philosophical works which this century produced. If a man belonging to another world should read these works, he would see in them such a triumph of the principle of philosophical independence, that it would be difficult for him to divine the existence of an opposite authority. Read Condillac, Reid, and Kant. Different in systems, different even in method, or at least in the application of method, they are one in the unity of their century; they are one in the same independence. Condillac was an abbé; I ask you if you see any trace of it in his writings.\* Reid, a minister of the Gospel, is so thoroughly penetrated with the principle of liberty, that he does not even speak of it.† Kant is Descartes appearing a century later:‡ he has the same liberty of spirit, less vigor, perhaps, and splendor of genius, but more comprehensive in his designs. Kant, coming after Descartes, is better understood than Descartes, because he generalizes more. He commenced by the severe and precise separation of philosophy and theology; he was never unfaithful to this distinction. Perhaps even, with his century, he had too much fear of theology and mysticism; his philosophy resolved itself too much into a pure criticism, a little too negative, into a new skep-

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\* Some traces might be found in the Appendix of the *Traité des Sensations*. See 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 8, p. 141.

† Ibid., Vol. 4, Lectures on Reid. ‡ Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 81 and p. 65, etc.

icism.\* Thus everywhere in the eighteenth century the principle of authority was either attacked or neglected ; so far for the generalization of the spirit of independence. As to its diffusion, I can, I think, dispense with establishing it for France ; you see and judge. Every one who wrote, from Voltaire down to the most puny *littérateur*, wrote for philosophy. Read Marmontel, read Thomas, read Chamfort, read La Harpe : all the slender literature of the eighteenth century is the echo, the instrument of the philosophical revolution ; it expanded it everywhere, at random. And it thus existed more or less in every country of Europe. In fact, everywhere in the eighteenth century, philosophy, robbing scholasticism of its last resting-places, chose no longer any other language than that used by everybody, the common language, as Cartesianism had done ; and further, like Cartesianism, it left the schools to go out into the world ; it found its way to the market-place, and therefore descended the more into different ranks of society. This diffusion of philosophical independence among all classes represented the diffusion of liberty in politics, that is, equality. Hence, little by little, there was formed in the different countries of Europe a great philosophical unity ; I do not say a unity of system, but a unity of character and spirit. When the enemies of philosophy triumph on account of the infinite diversity of systems, as destructive of all unity, they triumph falsely ; for diversity is so little opposed to unity, that it is, thus to speak, its very life. What, in fact, would be a dead unity, in some sort destitute of action and movement ? Movement is variety. And a movement like that of modern philosophy, the fundamental character of which is liberty, should, or at least very well may, end at different systems, without losing its unity, and even on account of its unity, since this unity is a unity of liberty, and that liberty, far from perishing in diversity of systems, triumphs in it, rules it, and constitutes it. Philosophical unity, put into the world by the

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\* 1st Series, Lecture 6 and Lecture 8.

eighteenth century, is therefore, and ought to have been, a unity in the philosophical spirit, and not in systems.

Of philosophy thus generalized, thus expanded, the eighteenth century made a power, and a power of action. Philosophy usually follows the movements of society, and does not precede them; nothing is more true, especially at the commencement of each epoch; but, at the end, when it has long been developed, when it has been well generalized and well expanded, when, therefore, it has acquired a consciousness of itself, of its nature, of its force, it forms a little world, a world apart, which has its influence on the rest of the world; it becomes a power, it mingles with events, it takes part in them, and on them leaves its trace. Thus it cannot be denied that in every country of Europe, in the eighteenth century, philosophy was a real power, that it had its action, an action analogous to the general mission of the century. The general mission of the eighteenth century was to bring the middle age to a close in all things. The philosophical mission of the eighteenth century was therefore to bring the middle age to a close in philosophy. Hence the character of the philosophy of the eighteenth century; hence its action and the results of this action.

To bring the middle age to a close in philosophy was to destroy, in a philosophical respect, the principle of authority, and to confine theology to its own domain. But this was not a simple and easy work; it was a laborious and complicated work, one mixed with evil as well as good. Men scarcely ever demand independence without engaging in revolt; doubtless they go out of servitude rightly only through virtue, but they also go out of it through license: there was then in the philosophy of the eighteenth century much license, I know; but I protest against this prejudice that would force us to believe that there was nothing but license in the philosophy of the last century. Nothing is more false. It is not true that the d'Holbachs and the La Mettries are the only philosophers of the eighteenth century. They made some noise in the saloons, but what did they do

in science? The history of philosophy scarcely takes cognizance of their persons or their names. The important question then was concerning the confinement of religious authority within the limits of theology; and they attacked theology, religion, every legitimate authority. They are foolish, I grant, and even wickedly foolish; but, in philosophy as in politics, I return crimes and folly to whom they belong. Let oblivion or infamy be the lot of the men who dishonored, by their excesses, the noble cause of philosophical independence; but let it not be said, let it not be believed, that these men are the only philosophers of the eighteenth century. By the side of such decried names, do you place the respectable names which the eighteenth century presents in philosophy? In France, in direct opposition to a d'Holbach, have you not Turgot? Were there any men more irreproachable, freer from all exaggeration, than the worthy professors who succeeded each other during three-quarters of the century in the chairs of Aberdeen, of Glasgow, and Edinburgh? Do you know of any better formed minds, of any nobler characters, than Hutchinson, Smith, Reid, and Dugald Stewart? Ascend as high as you please, where will you find a man more pure, in his life as well as in his thoughts, a soul more firm, a spirit more solid, a head at once sounder and vaster, than the illustrious philosopher of Konigsburg? Will the Scotch philosophy and the philosophy of Kant be given us as immoral and impious philosophies? And, nevertheless, do they not belong to the eighteenth century? Does not a profoundly liberal character animate them?

The eighteenth century has been called the century of philosophy; and after all, posterity will confirm this title; for it is from the eighteenth century that the advent of philosophy into the world under its own name dates, since before that it had been compelled to conceal itself under the cloak of theology, or of some other science, and did not dare to show itself with uncovered face. In the eighteenth century philosophy acquired, thus to speak, a public condition, and became an established thing,

which has its unquestionable rights and titles : such is the sacred legacy which the eighteenth century bequeathed to the nineteenth.

At the present time the revolutions which filled the last three centuries, and which in their fecund storms produced the sciences, the manners, the laws, the philosophy, the civilization of modern Europe, these revolutions have been accomplished ; their work has been consummated. The cause of independence of every kind, and among others the cause of philosophical independence, has been gained. Every thing falls into legitimate order, every thing returns, and ought to return, within its natural limits. On the one hand, religion takes again its beneficent empire over the soul ; it fortifies its holy authority by confining itself to matters of faith and to theology properly so called ; and it is satisfied with furnishing for true philosophy its highest inspirations. On the other hand, the philosophy of the nineteenth century is no longer that revolted slave which, by its very excesses, attested its long servitude : it is a noble freedman, whom the calm and moderate language of liberty becomes. Still revolutionary, because it was still disquieted, the philosophy of the eighteenth century, entirely occupied with combat, thought more of conquering than of rightly using victory. The philosophy of the nineteenth century is a victorious and legitimate power, which will purify and organize itself. I should be fortunate if these lectures, in always maintaining with respectful, yet immovable firmness, the independence of French philosophy, might help impress on it this pacific direction, the only one which is proper for its destinies, and which accords with the general spirit of our epoch : this would be the dearest success of all my efforts.



## LECTURE III.

## METHOD OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

**Subject of this lecture :** Method of the philosophy of the eighteenth century. —Of method in general. Analysis and synthesis. Their relations.—History. East.—Greece.—Scholasticism.—Modern philosophy.—Bacon and Descartes.—Seventeenth century. Beginning of method.—Seventeenth century. Triumph of method in its principle, analysis.—First, the eighteenth century generalized it and elevated it to its utmost rigor. Not an hypothesis of the eighteenth century. Secondly, it expands method everywhere. Condillac. Reid. Kant: method itself. Thirdly, it made of it a power.—Its good. Its evil.—Difference between the position of the eighteenth century and that of the nineteenth.

I COMMENCED by showing the eighteenth century with all its essential elements, and by causing you to seize its most general character. From that, I was able to deduce the character of the philosophy of the eighteenth century ; and as, at first, the eighteenth century had appeared to us nothing else than the last strife between the new spirit and the spirit of the middle age, in arriving at the philosophy of the eighteenth century, we recognized that it is nothing more than the definite victory of the spirit of liberty over the principle of authority which governed the philosophy of the middle age. The highest independence of the human reason, such is the distinctive trait of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, such is the unity of this philosophy. It is our business now to descend from this unity to the variety which it contains, to the schools and systems which the eighteenth century embraces. But, before entering into this research, there is another thing still, there is an intermediary point to which I must call your attention.

We can fully understand a collection of systems, or a particular system, only after having studied it under three different points of view, only after having submitted it to three tests. That

which it is necessary first of all to demand in a system, is its most general character, whether it is or is not a philosophical system, whether it does or does not belong to free reflection, which, being able to reject it or admit it, has admitted it for the single reason that it has been pleased to admit it, on the faith of the truth which was or appeared to be in it, and by the sole authority of reason. You see what must, at first, be demanded in any system; it is what we demanded in the philosophy of the eighteenth century. It is also very clear that we cannot understand a system, if we do not understand the special solutions which it gives of philosophical problems, if we do not understand the different parts of which it is composed, if we do not understand its logic, its metaphysics, its morality, etc.; such is the very matter of every history of philosophy, and will be the matter of this course on the philosophy of the eighteenth century. But if it is important to understand the solutions of the philosophical problems which a system presents, it is not less important to know how and by what route the author of this system arrived at these solutions, what direction his thoughts must have taken to conduct him to these particular results, and not to others. In a word, the general character of a system is one thing, its method is another. Moreover, method is the genius of a system, and a system is little else than a method in action, a method applied. One always can, a system being given, reascend to the method which could lead thither; or, a method being given, one can predict the system which will spring from its rigorous application. Put a method into the world, and you put a system into the world which the future will take care to develop. Between a system and its method, there is nearly the relation of effect to cause: this cause, then, must be reached in order to master any system. You see why, after having made an exposition of the character of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, and before entering into an examination of the different systems which it produced, it is necessary to understand the method or the methods which it employed, and which are the very principles of the systems which

we shall at some time have to examine. The philosophical method which reigned in the eighteenth century shall, therefore, and ought to be, the subject of this lecture.

What is the philosophical method of the eighteenth century? What are the relations of this method to that of the preceding century? In what does the former resemble the latter? in what does it differ from it? It resembles it in that it continues it; it differs from it in that it develops it on a larger scale. And what is this method which fills and measures with its progress the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that is, all modern philosophy? Does it come from modern philosophy? or is it anterior to modern philosophy? Has it not its precedents in the annals of philosophy? Does it not have its roots deep in the nature itself of philosophy? Was it not born with philosophy, and has it not accompanied philosophy in all its vicissitudes? This is what must be determined. Thus, you see, as the second lecture was only a counter-proof of the first, so this third lecture will be only a development of the second: it will have the same general treatment and the same conclusion.

We have distinguished, in the necessary movement of thought, two momenta, two essential modes, two fundamental forms,—spontaneity and reflection. Let us follow this fertile distinction.

All our faculties enter, at first, into spontaneous exercise, on account of the power which is inherent in them, and not on account of our own will; and they enter into exercise all together. We must not suppose (we are little inclined to suppose) that reason takes the first step, and attains alone, and in an abstract manner, the true, the just, the beautiful in itself. No; sensibility at least accompanies reason, and introduces into the soul, in addition to sensations, the very images of the external world. Soon the imagination takes a part, prolongs and even vivifies this picture by the power which is peculiar to itself: the heart also enters into play, and adds to the primitive picture new traits. All this is done at the same time, or nearly at the same time. But if every thing takes place simultaneously, and without the participa-

tion of our will, nothing is done without our knowledge ; and the simultaneous action of all our faculties results in a complex fact, consciousness. We not only feel, but we know that we feel ; we not only act, but we know that we act ; we not only think, but we know that we think ; to think without knowing that we think, is as if we should not think, and the peculiar quality, the fundamental attribute of thought, is to have a consciousness of itself.\* Consciousness is this interior light which illuminates every thing that takes place in the soul ; consciousness is the accompaniment of all our faculties, and, thus to speak, their echo. Whence it follows that every thing which is true of the primitive exercise of our faculties is true of consciousness, since consciousness is nothing else than the rebound of the action of all our faculties : and as all of our faculties are simultaneous in their exercise, as their result is necessarily complex, it is, therefore, confused, and consciousness is naturally indistinct. Such is the infancy of individuals, such is the infancy of nations. This infancy is often very long, but do not forget that it is rich ; do not forget that all the essential ideas which man can have, he possesses from the first day, for from the first day our faculties are developed. All truths are in primitive conceptions, only they are in them under the form of sentiments and of images. When I say that all our faculties are manifested in the first development of intelligence, I am mistaken, I forget one which is the most elevated of all, or at least is most inherent in the human personality, I mean reflection, the peculiar character of which is liberty. Reflection creates nothing, can create nothing ; every thing exists previous to reflection in the consciousness, but every thing pre-exists there in confusion and obscurity ; it is the work of reflection, in adding itself to consciousness, to illuminate that which was obscure, to develop that which was enveloped. Reflection is for consciousness what the microscope and the telescope are for the natural sight : nei-

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\* On Consciousness, as the necessary form of thought, see Vol. 1, Lecture 5.

ther of these instruments makes or changes the objects ; but in examining them on every side, in penetrating to their centre, these instruments illuminate them, and discover to us their characters and their laws. It is the same with reflection. Reflection can have no other end, in applying itself to consciousness, than to throw light enough on the picture to destroy or enfeeble the illusions which might lead us into error, or might destroy the images and forms which, in the consciousness, are always mixed with truth : it can propose to itself no result but a certain practical sagacity. But when reflection finds sufficient interest in the spectacle of consciousness to study it as a simple spectacle, when it proposes to render to itself an account of all its phenomena in order to recompose of them a new picture, as complete as the primitive picture of consciousness, but perfectly luminous ; then reflection becomes philosophy. Philosophy, as we saw last year, is nothing else than reflection on a great scale, reflection in itself and for itself, with no other design than that of understanding.

Such is the origin and the nature of philosophy. Now, what are the processes of philosophy ? what course does it take in order to arrive at its goal, or, to speak after the manner of the Greeks, what is the method of philosophy ? The nature of the philosophical method is in philosophy itself. Philosophy is reflection. But how do we reflect ? What is the condition of reflection ? What is the end of reflection ? What is the material of reflection ? The material of reflection is this primitive, obscure, and confused totality, which is consciousness. And what is the end of reflection ? It is to substitute for the primitive, obscure, and confused totality, a new totality, as extended as the first, but more lucid. Now, whence comes this obscurity ? from confusion ; and whence comes the confusion ? from the simultaneousness of all the parts of the picture. Therefore, in order to produce clearness and light, it is necessary to substitute division for simultaneousness, it is necessary to decompose that which is complex. To decompose, in the Greek language, means to analyze : analysis is therefore the condition of method. Reflection analy-

zes, but why ? To see better, to see better that which is, to observe better : analysis, then, resolves itself into observation. But the peculiarity of the phenomena of which consciousness is composed is, that they are suspended and cease, as soon as reflection, analysis, observation are applied. Thus, the precept to observe is good ; but whoever wishes does not observe, for a long time and at his ease, phenomena so fugitive, so instantaneous as those of consciousness, sentiments, images, ideas, which vanish and which die under the eye itself that observes them. To observe is not sufficient, then ; it is necessary to experiment. Reflection is a voluntary and free power ; it is necessary that it should reproduce, so far as in it lies, these same phenomena which the spontaneous action of our faculties brings into the consciousness and which disappear so rapidly. To accomplish this, it must search into the circumstances under which these phenomena take place, to skilfully replace them, and to revive these phenomena in order to observe them again. Has it observed a phenomenon under certain circumstances ? It must vary those circumstances, for the purpose of seeing this phenomenon again under new aspects, and so on till finally, from observations to observations, and from experiments to experiments, it may have recognized the phenomenon in question under all its aspects, on all its sides. One portion of the primitive picture is then known, but there still remain many other parts to be known and studied in the same manner.

Suppose that you have thus studied and recognized all ; all the elements of consciousness are known ; but it remains to know the relations of all these elements, the connection of all the parts of the picture ; it is the connection of the parts which constitutes the whole. Hence, reflection either consents to rest in its course and be ignorant of the primitive totality, or, after having recognized the different parts of this totality, it searches for the relations which bind them together, and from these co-ordinate relations it reconstructs the primitive totality. Relations, totality, unity, are what reflection must now search for ; and the recom-

position of the whole must follow its decomposition, if reflection would comprehend the whole, and not simply some of its parts. Now, as decomposition means, in Greek, analysis, the collecting again and recombination of parts means, in Greek, synthesis.

See whether both of these operations are not necessary in order to constitute method, that is, in order to arrive at the end of reflection and philosophy. Once more, this end is to substitute for an obscure whole a whole that has the greatest possible clearness : it is necessary to decompose the primitive whole, which is the work of analysis ; and it is necessary to recombine it, which is the work of synthesis. These are the two vital operations of method ; either of the two being wanting, the end is wanting. As to their relative worth, it is clear the value of synthesis depends upon that of analysis. For, how can we know the relations of phenomena, and phenomena collectively, when we have not studied them singly ? We are then compelled to suppose phenomena, and every synthesis which has not started with a complete analysis ends at a result which, in Greek, is called hypothesis ; instead of which, if synthesis has been preceded by a sufficient analysis, the synthesis founded upon that analysis leads to a result which, in Greek, is called system. The legitimacy of every synthesis is directly owing to the exactness of analysis ; every system which is merely an hypothesis is a vain system ; every synthesis which has not been preceded by analysis is a pure imagination : but at the same time every analysis which does not aspire to a synthesis which may be equal to it, is an analysis which halts on the way. On the one hand, synthesis without analysis, gives a false science ; on the other hand, analysis without synthesis, gives an incomplete science. An incomplete science is a hundred times more valuable than a false science ; but neither a false science nor an incomplete science is the ideal of science. The ideal of science, the ideal of philosophy, can be realized only by a method which combines the two processes which we have described.

Analysis and synthesis are necessary to each other, but if we

might distinguish in regard to things equally essential, it would be necessary to attach the most importance to analysis. For every analysis, some time or other, will find its synthesis; whereas, if you start prematurely by synthesis, all is lost, there is no result, and you can return to analysis only by destroying all your preceding work, and that brilliant synthesis whose seductions had blinded you in regard to its difficulties and its perils. What, too, is the history of philosophy? It is nothing else than the history of philosophical method; for philosophy is what philosophical method has made it: but as the fundamental one of these two operations of method is analysis, and the secondary one is synthesis, the history of method, that is, of philosophy, is the history itself of analysis, followed step by step by synthesis, which is legitimate or illegitimate, wise and real, or extravagant and hypothetical, according to what analysis makes it.

Let us rapidly run over the history of philosophical method up to the eighteenth century, in order to know in what condition the eighteenth century found this method, and what it made of it.

The East is doubtless the country of spontaneity and theology; but it was not wanting in reflection and philosophy; it was not, then, entirely wanting in method. I spoke to you not long ago\* of the Sankhya philosophy, the first precept of which is the rejection of the authority of the Vedas. This same Sankhya† philosophy contains an exposition of the human faculties and their operations which already shows a regular development of reflection and analysis. The fact is more evident still in one of the philosophies of India, which is called the Niaya‡ philosophy, which is nothing less than modern logic, in which the different laws that preside over reasoning are found submitted to an ingenious analysis. The Niaya doctrine is, in the annals of philosophy, the antecedent of the logic of Aristotle. But if in the East analysis already existed, it was a nascent analysis; and nascent analysis was feeble, like every thing which is commencing; and yet,

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\* Lecture 1.

† Further on, Lecture 5.

‡ Lecture 6.



Like every thing which is commencing, it must have been rash, and it was soon resolved into a vast, brilliant, but hypothetical synthesis. Unity rules in the Eastern world. The East decomposes but little; every thing remains there as at the first day of creation and the first day of thought, and the Oriental philosophy is eminently synthetic.

To speak in a general manner, Greece is the perfect contrast of the East. If the East is the country of unity, Greece is that of diversity. The East is stationary, Greece is full of movement and life, and passes through a thousand vicissitudes; the East is the seat of despotism, the image of absolute unity in society; Greece reflects in her laws and in her society the idea itself of variety: she is democratic. The East, it is true, begins to separate philosophy from theology; but in general, Oriental philosophy presents a theological aspect. In Greece, early enough, the division is brought about, and from the bosom of theology there springs with much trouble, but rapidly, an independent philosophy. So, in regard to method, we can say that, taken as a whole, the Greek philosophy, in its contrast with that of the East, is essentially analytical. But the Greek world, which embraces the whole ancient world, is vast, and the Greek philosophy has epochs that are very different.\* Without speaking of its infancy, and of the epoch in which philosophy, still very young, scarcely after having made a few superficial observations, is lost, on one side, in an empirical synthesis, and, on the other, in an idealistic synthesis; from Socrates, and with Socrates, a regular movement begins in Greek philosophy which can be divided into two parts, the first of which pertains more especially to analysis, the second to synthesis. From Socrates as far as to the neoplatonists, analysis rules in Greek philosophy; in the school of Alexandria, synthesis rules.

Socrates gave analysis to the Greek philosophy, but without entirely banishing from it synthesis; for synthesis exists, in germ,

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\* Further on, Lectures 7 and 8.

in induction, but analysis and interior observation are manifest in the *Know Thyself* to which Socrates continually appealed. It was a habit with Socrates to take such or such an hypothesis which the previous schools of Greek philosophy had bequeathed to him, whether the Ionian school or the Pythagorean school; he had the air of accepting it, at first, seduced by the seeming verity which it contained; then he decomposed this hypothesis, and in decomposing it, he reduced it to dust, and in its place he substituted an experimental truth which he borrowed from consciousness and analysis, and which became in his hands the basis of a circumspect induction, by which he attempted, but with infinite precaution, to arrive, I will not say at a system, but at conclusions of a certain import. Socrates did not leave a system; he left directions fertile in results. The Greek schools up to the first century of our era are all Socratic schools, and all of them have a more or less analytical character. Each one of these schools elucidated such or such a part of consciousness. It is the glory of Plato to have borne the light of analysis into the most obscure and inmost region; he searched out what, in this totality which forms consciousness, is the province of reason, what comes from it and not from the imagination and the senses, from within and not from without. The analysis of reason and the ideas which belong to it,—as unity, the infinite, the necessary, the beautiful, the just, the holy, etc.,—is what eminently distinguishes the Platonic philosophy. Aristotle went further in following the same course. Those same ideas which Plato had so well discerned, and had drawn from sensation, but without counting them or wholly enumerating them, and without looking for what they have in common, Aristotle studied separately, and reduced them to their most simple elements. Epicurus and Zeno also served experimental philosophy by definite and detailed analyses of virtues and vices, desires, passions, wants, all our motive and moral principles. The skeptics, Pyrrho, Ænesidemus, and Sextus, threw much light on our different faculties; in contesting their legitimate exercise, they forced their adversaries

to render to themselves a more exact account of the conditions to which these faculties are subjected, a more exact account of their bearing and their limits.

With the school of Alexandria commenced a new epoch in the Greek philosophy. To unite, was the great end of the school of Alexandria in all things. Placed geographically between Greece and Asia, it tried to combine the Asiatic genius with the Greek genius, religion with philosophy, synthesis with analysis. Hence the neoplatonic system, the last great representative of which is Proclus. This system is the result of the long work of the Socratic schools. It is an edifice built by synthesis with the materials which analysis had collected, tested, and accumulated from the time of Socrates to that of Plotinus. But analysis is just as valuable as synthesis; and as the first age of Greek philosophy was not the last term of analysis, it is clear that the philosophy of Alexandria could not be the last term of true synthesis. It embraced the entire system of entities; but what knowledge could there be of this system where so many sciences, unknown to the ancients, were wanting? Astronomy alone, with mathematics, had taken the lead. Nevertheless, astronomy had made so little progress, that Aristotle, think of it well, the same Aristotle who gave to the world natural history and logic, giving way perhaps to the Pythagorean traditions, pretended that the matter of the sun is incorruptible. This was a pure hypothesis; it endured almost twenty centuries. Behold what was the cost of leaping over analysis, of being at first precipitated into synthesis. Aristotle affirms that the matter of the sun is incorruptible; and as Aristotle was a man of genius, and as it is still easier to repeat him than to contradict him, men repeated without knowing why, up to the seventeenth century, that the matter of the sun is incorruptible. But how are hypotheses overthrown? By observation. So what did Galileo do? He had been taught, and for a long time he perhaps believed, on the faith of Aristotle, that the matter of the sun is incorruptible. At length he invented, or, if you will, he perfected the telescope, and applied it

to the sun. He saw spots on it. Hence the overthrow of Aristotle's hypothesis, and even then after much resistance. Thus hypotheses are prolonged and perpetuated, as long as they are not strongly contradicted by observation ; and they are inevitable as long as synthesis has not been preceded by analysis.

The telescope and Galileo naturally conduct us into the midst of modern Europe. In fact, it is necessary to put aside scholasticism, when we are treating of method and analysis. Scholasticism borrowed from authority its premises and its conclusions. There was no place for any experiment, for any true analysis, which could have disarranged the premises, and with the premises the conclusions. There was no more a place for synthetic invention and hypothesis ; for synthetic invention and the genius of hypothesis might have conducted to innovations. Rigorously speaking, scholasticism does not belong to philosophy properly so called. Nevertheless, as the human spirit, however enchained, preserves always some liberty, there are in scholasticism some admirable glimmerings of philosophy ; there is an ingenious and subtile, but often verbal analysis ; there is a skilful ordering of the different matters of instruction, a powerful, but artificial synthesis.

The sixteenth century, you know, is only a sort of tumultuous insurrection of the new spirit against scholasticism. It was not possible for it to have any method. The philosophical revolution which gave us modern philosophy, was not established till the seventeenth century, and it could be established and take consistency only in method. It was therefore in the seventeenth century that method appeared ; here was presented a remarkable phenomenon which had been wanting to the period of the greatest reflection in the Greek philosophy. Doubtless, Socrates continually recommended modesty, good sense, circumspection ; he recommended that one should endeavor to know himself before endeavoring to know any thing else. *Know thyself* was already a method, but a nascent method ; it occupies little more than the first pages of the most Socratic dialogues of Plato ;

hence the ready digressions of the systematic spirit: but in the seventeenth century the question of method is the fundamental one. Warned by long experience, the first care of the human spirit then is to raise on all sides barriers against its own impetuosity. On all sides method is sought. Most of the works which honor the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, treat wholly of method. From its first appearance, modern philosophy betrays the profound reflection and the circumspection by which it is characterized. In place of marching on, at hazard, in the pursuit of truth, it looks back upon itself, and asks of itself by what route and in what manner it ought to proceed. What is the best method, is the object of search on every side; that is the great object which Bacon and Descartes propose to themselves.

The philosophical revolution of the seventeenth century was directed immediately against scholasticism. Bacon\* also everywhere attacked the formalism of the peripatetic method, the logic of deduction, which doubtless divided and classified, but which, at that time, divided and classified words, rather than things. Bacon called his contemporaries to a more real philosophy; he exhorted them to leave the schools, to philosophize in presence of the world, face to face with the human soul. He would have philosophy nothing else than observation and induction founded upon observation. I cannot forbear citing to you an admirable sentence of the *Instauratio Magna* :† “ True philosophy is that which is the faithful echo of the voice of the world, which is written in some sort under the dictation of things, which adds nothing of itself, which is only the rebound, the reflection of reality.” Bacon calls upon man to take possession of the world, to extend his power over all nature.‡ Now, the power of man is

\* On Bacon, see further along, Lecture 11.

† “ *Es demum est vera philosophia quæ mundi ipsius voces quam fidelissime reddit, et veluti dictante mundo conscripta est, . . . nec quidquam de proprio addit, sed tantum iterat et resonat.*”

‡ “ *Humani generis ipsius potentiam et imperium in rerum universitatem instaurare et amplificare.*” *Nov. Organ.*, lib. 1, Aphor. 129.

extended over nature upon this condition, that man shall spy out her secrets; and he can do this only by conforming himself to a wise method, in being a slave of the nicest observation; as Bacon says, we learn to command nature only by obeying her.\* The grandeur of the results is in direct proportion to the wisdom of the processes. And to observe, in Bacon's meaning of the term, is not simply to profit by the good luck which chance gives us; the Baconian observation is something more than this; it is experimentation. Bacon continually recommended an observation which interrogates nature, in place of being a passive scholar; an observation which divides, and, to avail myself of his energetic expressions, which dissects and anatomizes nature.† So far for observation. And what is induction? It is the process by which the mind is elevated from the particular to the general, from the known to the unknown, from phenomena to their laws, to those laws, whether of nature or of intelligence, which are, as it were, the elevated towers to which we can climb only by all the steps of observation and induction, but from the top of which we then command a vast horizon.

By this method, Bacon undertook to renew philosophy. By this he everywhere means, not philosophy entire, but a part of philosophy, natural philosophy, physics. The following is Bacon's language: "When observation is applied to nature, it draws from it a science as real as nature; when it is applied to the soul, it ends only at frivolous reveries."‡ And as one aberration always brings another, and in place of severely and strongly uniting observation and induction, that is, analysis and synthesis, the method of Bacon soon became exclusive; it directed all its efforts

\* "Naturæ imperare parendo." *Nov. Organ.*, lib. 1, Aphor. 139.

† "Ipsius mundi dissectione atque anatomia diligentissima." *Nov. Organ.*, lib. 1, Aphor. 124.—"Naturam secare debet." *Ibid.*, Aphor. 105.

‡ "Mens humana si agat in materiam, naturam rerum ac opera Dei contemplando, pro modo naturæ operatur atque ab eadem determinatur: si ipsa in se vertatur, tanquam aranea texens telam, tum demum interminata est, et parit telas quasdam doctrinæ tenuitate filii operisque mirabiles, sed quædam usum frivolas et inanes." *De Augm.* 1.

to observation and analysis, which it even concentrated upon particular objects, those of sensibility. Hence a purely experimental school, a school of sensualistic metaphysics.

Let us now see what our Descartes did. He established in France the same method which England wished to attribute to Bacon alone; he established it with less splendor of style, but with the vigor and the precision which always characterize him who is not contented with tracing rules, but who himself applies them to practice, and gives the example with the precept. The method of Descartes is composed of four rules; they are as follows:

1st, To put confidence in nothing but evidence.—This is to exhort philosophy to depart from tradition, authority, the formalism of the schools, and to become real and living.

2d, To divide objects as far as possible.—This division is the dissection and anatomy of Bacon.

3d, To make classifications as numerous, as extensive, as various as possible.—This is to recommend that analysis should be complete, and to exhaust observation before drawing any conclusion: an important and wise rule, but more easy to recommend than to follow.

4th, Thus far the rules of Descartes are purely analytical. The fourth is the synthetic side of the Cartesian method. In fact, the fourth recommends order, regular connection, that art which, out of all the parts divided and successively examined and exhausted by analysis, reconstructs and forms a whole, a system.

Descartes is, you know, not only a great metaphysician, and a great geometrician; he is also a great physical philosopher, and even a great physiologist for his times. To Descartes, above all, must be referred the vivifying principle of modern philosophy, the suppression and searching out of final causes.\* Bacon, doubtless, had given the precept; Descartes improved it, and established

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\* On Final Causes in Physics, see 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lecture 19, p. 337, and *Fragments of the Cartesian Philosophy*, p. 349.

it in practice: his method and his example contributed much to the creation of modern physics. But it must be said, as the method of Bacon soon became exclusive, and was reduced to physical analysis, so the Cartesian method inclined especially towards interior analysis, towards analysis of the soul, that is, to use a Greek form of expression, towards psychological analysis. Descartes is the founder of psychology. The great, the true antecedent of the Cartesian psychology is the Socratic school; and the *know thyself* is the preparation for the *I think, therefore I am*. But this last precept is profound and precise in a very different sense from the first. I think, therefore I am; that is, not only all external existence, that of Deity, that of the world, but even my own existence, is attested to me only by thought. If, then, you do not make a sufficient study of thought, you will not arrive at the legitimate knowledge of any existence, even your own; whence it follows that every ontological speculation must be preceded by psychological researches, and that the root of philosophy is in psychology. The school of Descartes ought to have been, and it was, above all, a metaphysical and idealistic school. Hence Malebranche, Fenelon, and others. Its tendency, you see, is precisely contrary to that of Bacon. Bacon and Descartes are, as it were, the two opposite poles of the seventeenth century: their relation, their point of union, is in the general method which is common to them.

Bacon and Descartes gave to the world true method. No one could take more precautions against hypothesis than these two men took; no one could raise against hypothesis barriers more firm, and, in appearance, more insurmountable. But such is the feebleness of the human mind, such is the power of the movement of generalization which bears us towards synthesis, and through that too often towards hypothesis, that the method of Bacon and Descartes, after having overturned scholasticism, was itself destroyed through the seductions of a premature synthesis, which ended at legitimate hypotheses. The seventeenth century began with treatises on method, and it ended with hypotheses. Bacon



did nothing great in physics; and in metaphysics his attempts are such, in truth, that I shall pass over them in silence, out of respect for the memory of this great man, and for the rules which he promulgated. And what sprang from Cartesianism, from that school which had recommended so much to believe only upon evidence, to doubt for a long time, and to put confidence in nothing but the authority of thought? Here it is: 1st, As a consequence, if not necessary, at least natural enough, Spinozism; 2d, The *God-vision* of Malebranche; 3d, The idealism of Berkeley; 4th, The pre-established harmony of Leibnitz. We must not be imposed upon by the appearance of mathematical rigor. The names of Descartes and of Leibnitz say all; and they were as excellent geometers as Spinoza, Malebranche, Berkeley, and Wolf. But true rigor does not consist in such or such a form; and it is in vain that the mantle of geometry is thrown over hypotheses; they may be dissembled, perhaps, but they are not rendered more solid. It is the judgment of Leibnitz upon Descartes, a judgment which can be extended to the whole school, and to Leibnitz himself.\*

Such is, once more, the feebleness of the human spirit, that we start by method and end by hypotheses. It was in such a condition that the eighteenth century found philosophy and method. What could it do? It was necessary for it either to desert the seventeenth century, and to recoil in civilization and philosophy, or to take its method; and if it took the method, it was necessary for it to renounce the hypotheses of the seventeenth century, for the method was in contradiction with the hypotheses. The eighteenth century, therefore, took the method of the seventeenth

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\* *Cartesius in dissertatione de Methodo et in Meditationibus metaphysicis attulisse plura egregia negari nequit, et recte imprimis Platonis studium revocasse abducendi mentem a sensibus, utiliter quoque dubitationes veterum Academicorum revocasse; sed mox eundem in constantia quadam et affirmandi licentia scopo excidisse nec incertum a certo distinxisse, hocque non aliunde magis apparere quam ex scripto ipsius in quo, hortante Merzemo, hypotheses suas mathematico habitu vestire voluerat. (Letter to Bierling, Collection of Korthold, Vol. 4, p. 14.)*

century ; and turning it against the Cartesian hypotheses, it destroyed and overturned them. Moreover, in seeing this Cartesian method, so complete and so sure, losing itself so quickly in hypothetical synthesis, the eighteenth century was so struck with the danger and the facility of hypotheses, that it feared all synthesis ; and, cutting in twain the Cartesian method, it either neglected or proscribed synthesis, and regarded only analysis. Doubtless the procedure is violent and irregular, for the philosophical method consists in two operations, of which one is as necessary as the other ; but the fundamental operation being analysis, since analysis is the very condition of every good synthesis, after all, the eighteenth century was not so much to blame for rejecting synthesis, and confining itself to the vital operation of method. The world is vast, time is immense ; there is a place for every thing in time and in the world ; and, in the distribution of the work of centuries, I do not see why a century should not be exclusively charged with a single operation, in order the better to accomplish it, and with the important task of bequeathing to the following century results purely analytical, which this century might, in course, elevate to a legitimate synthesis. The adoption of analysis, as a single method, resulted in the definite victory of analysis, and the radical destruction of the spirit of hypothesis. This is the philosophical character of the eighteenth century. The eighteenth century borrowed from the seventeenth the methodical operation which had done every thing that had been well done, the operation which is the very principle of the philosophical revolution of the seventeenth century ; and, in developing this principle, it developed the revolution which it had produced, extended it, achieved it, consummated it.

The eighteenth century did for the analytical method what it had done for the spirit of philosophical independence. 1st, It generalized it ; 2d, It propagated it ; 3d, It made of it a power of action.

The eighteenth century generalized analysis. Philosophy, becoming still more cautious on account of the false steps of Carte-

anism, was eager to redouble its circumspection. All the schools which fill up the eighteenth century, indeed, the most opposite schools, have this common character of commencing with a treatise *ex professo* on method. And in what do these treatises on method consist? In a single thing, the proscription of hypothesis, and consequently, of synthesis itself, and the consecration and, thus to speak, the apotheosis of analysis. Analysis is, as it were, the universal remedy against all errors, past, present, and future: it is the only method which can and must lead to all truths. Thus Condillac wrote a special treatise against abstract systems, that is, against synthesis; and he not only made a book *ad hoc*,\* but there is not one of his works in which he did not display more or less opposition to synthesis; it is in some sort an obligatory attack, the necessary starting-point of all the works of Condillac and his school. And what did the Scotch school do? Precisely the same thing. The works of Reid might be called long treatises on method.† Hypothesis is in some sort the bugbear of the philosophy of the eighteenth century: it frightened Kant himself. In the prologomena which precedes the principal work of this great man, he did what had been done in France and Scotland: he attributed all the evils of philosophy to the premature employment of synthesis, and he recognized no other remedy than analysis, analysis of thought and its laws, of our faculties and their limits. Each of his great works was called a *critic*, and his philosophy *criticism*.‡

The eighteenth century not only recommended analysis, it followed and practised it. Here is, for example, an immense result of the eighteenth century. In any known century of the history of philosophy, never was there made a greater number of books and researches, never was there a greater philosophical movement; and, at the same time, I do not fear to affirm that never

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lecture 2, p. 100.

† 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lectures on Reid.

‡ Ibid., Vol. 5, Lectures 2 and 3.

were there fewer hypotheses; I might almost say that there was not a single hypothesis in the whole course of the eighteenth century. Examine Reid and the Scotch, you will have to regret in them the want of more systematic force, but you will not have to deplore in them aberrations from the spirit of system. There is no department of philosophy upon which Kant has not left great works. Well! there is not in him a single hypothesis. Search in the eighteenth century for something that resembles the *God-vision* of Malebranche, that resembles the pre-established harmony of Leibnitz; there is no more of the *Deus ex machina*, no more of theological hypothesis, there is no longer a shadow of the middle age. Such is the glory of the philosophy of the eighteenth century. There remains, thanks to God, much to add to this philosophy, but there is little to retrench; there are many spaces to fill up, there are no hypotheses to destroy. The only school which was at all hypothetical, was precisely that which most assumed the honor of having put analysis upon the throne, the school of sensation. Condillac produced his *Treatise against Systems*, and some time after the *Treatise on Sensations*. Shall we find in the second of these works the application of the sage analysis recommended in the first? No, we shall find in it an hypothesis, the hypothesis of the Statue-man, which opened the way to the Machine-man, to the Plant-man. Condillac supposes a man all of whose senses are inclosed within an envelope of marble, who also has only a single sense, that of smell; and he examines with minute care, and a sort of profundity, that which results from this hypothesis. After having accorded to the Statue-man one sense, Condillac accords to him a second, then a third, then a fourth; then, finally, he accords all the senses to him, removes the marble which covers humanity, and presents it such as it now is. I am deceived; I should say such as the hypothesis of Condillac made it: for it is a humanity in which I do not find all of mine; I find in it neither all the faculties which are in

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 3, Lectures 2 and 3.

me, nor all the laws which govern the action of my faculties. There is a great waste of analysis in the *Traité des Sensations*, which is, without comparison, the master-piece of Condillac; but this analysis rests upon hypothesis. What is analyzing an hypothesis? It is to amuse one's self by pursuing it in all its details, it is to deduce hypothetical conclusions from hypothetical premises. This is not true analysis. True analysis consists in taking humanity as it is, without any systematical prejudgment, to place one's self before it, and, as Bacon wished, to do nothing else than to reproduce it, to write under its dictation. I accuse, in general, the school of sensation of having been almost the only hypothetical school of the eighteenth century. But it is nevertheless true that it transferred analysis even into hypothesis, showing itself still faithful to the method which it professed and which it betrayed; so that it is only necessary to apply to it its own method in order to confound it. This I shall do hereafter. But it would be unjust to judge the whole philosophy of the eighteenth century by a single school, and to judge this whole school by a few aberrations. It is necessary to recognize that the school of sensation gave very definite analyses of the only part which it left to humanity; and by this it rendered true services to philosophy. The Scotch school bore analysis into the more delicate parts of human nature, neglected by the sensualistic school. Kant is the least chimerical of men. For him, nothing is more real than the sensational part of human knowledge; but human knowledge is complex; there is found in it a part which does not properly belong to sensation, but to intelligence, to reason; a rational part, perfectly real, which it is necessary to disengage from the midst of the whole, in order to study it in itself. It is the study of this rational part of our knowledge, taken separately, that is, the study of pure reason, in all matters, which makes the character of the philosophy of Kant.\* He pursued this analytical study, this critic of pure reason, in metaphysics, in morals, in æsthetics, in

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\* 1st Series, Vol. 5.

equity and jurisprudence. The language of Kant is more or less agreeable; his thought is always precise and profound. In his numerous productions we should search in vain for an hypothesis. I repeat it, there is not one; and I am constrained to remind you that Kant, friend of Lambert and Euler, is not only a psychologist of the first order, but that he was in his times a geometrician, an astronomer, and a distinguished physical philosopher; he was also either the creator or the most remarkable promoter of physical geography.

Thus to generalize analysis, to separate it from synthesis, to take it as the exclusive method, and to give it all sciences to re-construct—such is the fundamental character of the eighteenth century in regard to method. It thus propagated analysis. From one end of Europe to the other, a cry was raised against synthesis; literature served as a trumpet for philosophy, and repeated it in long echoes; it propagated the spirit of analysis as it had the spirit of independence. Hence, with the unity of the spirit of independence, the unity of the spirit of analysis, as a new trait and new attribute of the philosophical unity of the eighteenth century. Let us add that the philosophy of the eighteenth century, after having generalized the spirit of analysis, and after having propagated it in all classes of society and in all the civilized countries of Europe, made of it a true power. Doubtless, many sciences in the eighteenth century went before philosophy, and applied the general spirit of the century to their own objects, even without understanding what they did; but it is also true that philosophy, penetrating these sciences, ended by applying to them its method with rigor and superior precision, and by that means gave to all these sciences a new impulse. Read the work of the creator of French chemistry, and you will see that Lavoisier proposed to apply the analytical method to chemistry. Philosophical analysis, it must be said, is the mother of modern chemistry; this is a service already great enough. Did not philosophical analysis produce the physiology of Bichat? Analysis was also applied to the moral sciences, to criticism, to

grammar. The abuse which was made of the word proves in what estimation the thing was held.

It is incontestable that the character of the philosophical method of the eighteenth century was that of being exclusively analytical. The good and the evil of this exclusive culture are evident. The good, you have seen, is the definite destruction of hypothesis and a bad synthesis, and a vast collection of well-made experiments and observations. The evil is, that it decried synthesis too much, and in doing this it decried the past too much, which had been more synthetical than analytical. It would have been wise to demand the rights of analysis and experiment, without neglecting, or at least without proscribing legitimate synthesis. It would have been wise to destroy the hypotheses bequeathed by Cartesianism, and to render justice to the genius of Cartesianism. Just because the pinnacle of all preceding centuries had been reached, it was necessary to do justice to all the great philosophical movements which had produced this last result; it was necessary to render justice to the East, to Greece, to the middle age, to the seventeenth century, which had prepared and produced the eighteenth. But the ignorance and disdain of the past, even in the greatest men, were admirable in the eighteenth century. I do not even except Kant. Kant was ignorant of the history of philosophy in its remoter epochs; he did not understand well the philosophy which preceded him, Cartesianism, and in general he is severe upon his predecessors.\* This is at once great injustice and great inconsistency. To decry the past and one's predecessors, is to decry the history of the science which one cultivates, it is to decry one's own labors, or it is to pretend that thus far all centuries and all men have been deceived, it is true, but that the right century has finally come, and the man for whom it has been reserved to discover truth, and to raise the veil which concealed it from all eyes.

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\* See 1st Series, Vol. 5; we shall find the same severity in regard to Reid, *ibid.*, Vol. 4, Lecture 22, p. 305.

Let us recognize the present state of things ; let us render to ourselves an account of what the eighteenth century did, and of what it remains for us to do ourselves. The political mission of the eighteenth century was to bring the middle age to a close, its general mission in philosophy was to make an end of authority ; its more special mission, in point of method, was to make an end of hypothesis. Such was the mission of the eighteenth century ; it accomplished it in method as in every thing else. At present political liberty is so strong, that we need have no further fear in regard to its destruction : the work of organization has commenced. At the present time philosophical independence is so firmly established that it is time to cease from useless and imprudent hostilities, and philosophy ought finally to join hands with religion, with respect as well as with independence. So the analysis which the eighteenth century bequeathed to the nineteenth must have sufficient self-reliance to look synthesis in the face, and no longer to be frightened at it. To abandon analysis would be nothing less than overthrowing the eighteenth century and receding in the order of time ; but to bound itself by analysis, would be nothing less than resigning itself to an operation true in itself, but incomplete, exclusive, insufficient, convinced of being able to conduct only to an imperfect science ; it would not be receding, but it would not be advancing. Let us advance, gentlemen ; let us not abandon analysis, but let us no longer fear synthesis. As the eighteenth century did its work, so let the nineteenth do its own. Let us advance, but with infinite precaution ; let us not recoil before synthesis, but let us enter into it only by the route, and with the light, of analysis.



## LECTURE IV.

## CLASSIFICATION OF PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS.

**Subject of this lecture:** The systems which filled up the philosophy of the eighteenth century.—That these systems are anterior to the eighteenth century; that they are found in all the great epochs of the history of philosophy, and that they have their root in the human mind. Philosophical origin of these systems.—1st, Sensualism. Its good: its evil.—2d, Idealism. Its good: its evil.—3d, Skepticism. Its good: its evil.—4th, Mysticism. Its good: its evil.—Natural order of the development of these four systems.—Their relative utility.—Their intrinsic merit.

We understand the general character of the century whose philosophy we propose to study; we understand the character of this philosophy; we understand the character of the method which it everywhere employed: it only further remains for us to understand the different systems which it embraced; and at first, we have to search out carefully their distinctive traits, to determine their number, to assign them their relative place, before entering into a profound and detailed examination of each one of them.

There are contrary opinions in regard to the philosophy of the eighteenth century. Here, it is commended as having renewed philosophy, as having destroyed the ancient systems, and as having replaced them by entirely new systems; above all, there is attributed to it the honor of a celebrated system, regarded by its partisans as the last term of civilization and of philosophy. Moreover, the philosophy of the eighteenth century is accused of having produced very few systems; there is even turned against it a celebrated system, such a system, it is maintained, as could have ruled only upon the ruins of all others and in the barrenness of the philosophical spirit. On either side there is equal error, equal ignorance of facts and of the wealth of philosophical systems in the eighteenth century. When we take into consideration not

only such or such a country, but all Europe, which we must do, since in the eighteenth century, as we have seen, one of the leading characteristics of the times is the formation of European unity; when, I say, we give all Europe as a theatre for philosophy, we perceive that no particular system ruled there, and obtained there an exclusive domination.

What are the different systems which contend for the empire of philosophy in the eighteenth century? What are the relations of these systems to those of the preceding centuries? In what do they resemble them? in what do they differ from them? The philosophical systems of the eighteenth century singularly resemble those of the seventeenth and the sixteenth, for they are precisely the same systems. There is not one less, there is not one more. The philosophy of the eighteenth century continues, it is true, the anterior systems of the seventeenth and the sixteenth, but in continuing them it develops them in grander proportions and on a vaster scale.

This is not all: have, or have not, these systems, which fill up and measure with their progress all modern philosophy, their antecedents in the history of philosophy? Are they born with modern philosophy, or do they precede it? They precede it; you find them already in the middle age; you find them in Greece; you find them even in the old East. It is evident that these systems have their roots in the very nature of the human mind, that they belong to the human mind itself, and not to such a country or such a century. In fact, think of it, I pray you: what can be the true parent of all philosophical systems, if not the human mind, which is at once the subject and the necessary instrument of philosophy? The human mind is, as it were, the original of which philosophy is the more or less exact, more or less complete, representation. To search in the human spirit for the roots of philosophical systems is, therefore, not to make an hypothesis; it is simply to search for effects in their cause; it is to derive the history of philosophy from its most elevated, most certain source. In the human mind, then, we shall seek the ori-

gin and the explanation of these different systems, which, born with philosophy, have followed it in all its vicissitudes, have perpetually participated in its march, in its advances, in its improvements, and which, starting from the foundation of the East, after having traversed the world, found a resting-place in Europe, in the middle of the eighteenth century.

I hope I have established this important truth, that religion is the cradle of philosophy. In every epoch of the world, religion is the foundation of that epoch ; it is religion which makes the general faith of an epoch, and, for this reason, its manners, and, again, for this reason, up to a certain point, its institutions. Religion also contains philosophy ; but it either retains it in itself and an immobile faith enchains reflection, and then there is no philosophy ; or reflection is developed, but only in a sufficient measure to give regularity and order to religious opinions, to preside over their exposition and their teaching, and then there is theology ; or finally, reflection emancipates itself, breaks the ties of all authority, and searches for truth in relying only upon itself ; and then, but only then, is philosophy born. And where does philosophy search for truth, that is, to what is reflection applied ? We have seen that all truths have been primitively given us ; philosophy does not invent any ; its task is to render itself an account of them, to collect them and elucidate them. For the character of the primitive picture to which reflection is applied, you know, is confusion. Whence comes this confusion ? From the simultaneousness of the parts of the picture. And what is this picture ? Consciousness. We feel, we act, we truly think, only on this condition, that we are conscious of it. Consciousness is altogether a world in miniature, it is the universe abridged. By the senses external nature is introduced, and reflected in consciousness. Moreover, in the course of every voluntary and free act, the idea of liberty, the idea of good and evil, of virtue and vice, the whole retinue of human personality, the moral world, in fine, appear in consciousness. And thought, too, with the laws which govern it, the relations which it sustains to its eternal

principle, the whole world of intelligence, is manifested in consciousness. In a word, all our faculties, with the notions which they gain from their application to their objects, have their counterpart in the consciousness. It is therefore rigorously true, that consciousness is the universe abridged, the universe in the limits of human perception. Such is the picture to which reflection is applied. It is very rich, but necessarily confused. How can reflection elucidate it? By substituting division for simultaneousness. The necessary instrument of reflection, therefore, is analysis, and analysis has for its end synthesis: it proposes, after having exhausted division, to recompose what it first decomposed. Synthesis is the last term of analysis, as analysis is the condition of every good synthesis. It remains to know with what analysis and reflection shall commence. Reflection, in applying itself to consciousness, finds in it a very great number of phenomena. What are those to which it is first applied? Such is the question. Reflection is at first feeble, because it is taking its first step; it is therefore necessary that the phenomena to which it applies itself should be those which shine with the most light and solicit most its attention, and also the phenomena of which it can most easily render to itself an account. What are the phenomena that unite these two conditions?

When we enter into our consciousness, we find there a certain number of phenomena marked by this particular character, that we are not able to produce them or destroy them, to retain them or send them away, to augment them or decrease them according to our fancy; for example, the emotions of every kind, the desires, the passions, the appetites, the wants, pleasure, pain, etc., all the phenomena which are not introduced into the soul by its will, but in spite of it, by the single fact of external impression, received and perceived, that is, by sensation. This order of phenomena is incontestable, and it is very extensive; it constitutes a large number of our motives to action, it determines a great part of our conduct. It is also true that, among our most general notions, there are some which, when we examine them closely, are

resolved into the least general notions, which, from decomposition to decomposition, are resolved into sensational ideas.

The phenomena of sensation, just because they are the most external to the soul, the least profound and the least intimate, are the most apparent; they immediately provoke attention, and are the most easy to be observed. Feeble, and with little confidence, reflection applies itself, therefore, in the first place to these phenomena, as to the most superficial of all; and it finds in studying them a useful exercise, at once sure and easy, which fortifies it, pleases it, and fixes it. Analysis goes further, it refers sensation to the impression made on the organ, and refers this to external objects, which become then the root of our sensations, and therefore of our ideas. Hence the importance of studying nature, the need and the talent of observing its phenomena and of recognizing its laws. Develop, aggrandize, multiply these results by the aid of centuries, and you will have, with the physical sciences, a certain science of humanity, a philosophy which has its truth, its utility, its grandeur.

If this philosophy pretended only to explain by sensation a large number of our ideas and of the phenomena of consciousness, this explanation would be very admissible; the system would contain no error. But it does not go thus far and no farther; reflection, constrained to divide that which it wishes to study, and, to see well, to regard only a single thing at a time, stops at the part which it studies, takes it for the whole reality, and after having discerned a very real order of phenomena, preoccupied with their truth, their light, their number, their importance, it considers it as the only order of phenomena which can be in the consciousness. After having said: Such or such of our notions, and, if you will, many of our notions are derived from sensation, therefore sensation constitutes and explains a considerable order of phenomena; reflection rashly adds: All our notions, all ideas come from sensation, and there is not in the consciousness a single phenomenon which cannot be referred to this origin. Hence this system, which, in place of referring a large

part of consciousness to sensibility, recognizes only that, and has received from its very exaggeration the merited name of sensualism, that is, the philosophy which is supported exclusively upon the senses.

Sensualism can be true only on the condition that there shall not be in the consciousness a single element which cannot be explained by sensation: let us take account, then, of the elements of consciousness, but rapidly. Are there not in the consciousness free determinations? Is it not certain that we often resist passion or desire? Now, is that desire and passion, which combats passion and desire? Is it sensation? If sensation is the sole principle of all the phenomena of activity, as the character inherent in sensation, and consequently inherent in every thing that comes from it, is passivity, voluntary and free activity is then destroyed; behold sensualism already pushed to fatalism. Moreover, sensation is not only fatal, it is diverse, multiple, indefinitely variable. As there are no two leaves of a tree which exactly resemble each other, so the most uniform phenomenon of sensation has no two identical moments: sensations, emotions, passions, desires, all phenomena, unceasingly change in a perpetual metamorphosis. Does this perpetual metamorphosis exhaust the internal reality? Do you not believe that you are a being one and identical with itself, a being which was yesterday the same as it is to-day, and which to-morrow will be the same as it is to-day or was yesterday? Is not the identity of personality, the unity of your being, the unity of your *me* a certain fact of consciousness, or, to speak more correctly, is it not the very foundation of all consciousness? Now, how can identity be drawn from variety? How can the unity of consciousness and the *me* be drawn from the variety of the phenomena of sensation? Thus, in the philosophy of sensation, there is no unity to bring together and combine the varieties of sensation, to compare them and judge them. A moment since we saw that this philosophy destroys liberty; we now see that it destroys personality itself, the identical and single *me* which we are, and reduces our exist-

ence to a pale and mobile reflection of external existence, diverse and variable, that is, to a result of physical and material existence: the philosophy of sensation, therefore, necessarily ends at materialism. Finally, as the soul of man is, in the system of sensation, only the result and collection of our sensations, so God is nothing else than the collection, the last generalization of all the phenomena of nature: he is a kind of soul of the world, which is, with respect to the world, what the soul which sensualism leaves us is with respect to the body. The human soul according to sensualism is an abstract, general, collective idea, which represents in the last analysis the diversity of our sensations; the god of the world according to sensualism is an abstraction of the same kind, which is resolved, which is successively decomposed, into the different parts of this world, which alone is in possession of reality and existence. This is not the God of the human race, this is not a God distinct from the world; now, the denial of a God distinct from the world has a name very well known in human languages and in philosophy.

The philosophy of sensation is contemporaneous with philosophy itself, from the first day it has produced its consequences; it has produced them, and it has been overwhelmed by them. More than three thousand years this system has existed; more than three thousand years the same objections have been made to it; for three thousand years it has been unable to answer these objections: but I must hasten to add that for three thousand years it has rendered the most precious services to the human race, by studying an order of facts which, doubtless, is not the only one in consciousness, but which is incontestably there, and which, analyzed and deepened, related to its objects and bound to their laws, becomes the source of sciences real and certain, useful and admirable. But finally, this system, since it cannot render an account of all the phenomena of consciousness, cannot be the last term of philosophy.

Let us pass to another order of the phenomena of consciousness, to another system, to another philosophy.

Reflection required a real order of phenomena, the order most

apparent, most easy for observation. It was necessary that reflection should start thus ; but it did not stop there. Acquiring more firmness and experience, it descends further into consciousness, and finds there the phenomena which I have just described to you in a very general manner, the phenomenon of liberty, the human personality, the identity of the *me*, and many other notions which it tries in vain to analyze, which it cannot reduce to elements that are purely sensational. Reflection also remarks that it is constrained to receive all accidents that take place, all sensations, all thoughts, all actions of the soul, as well as the events of the external world, at a certain time. It remarks that it necessarily places this portion of time in connection with a still more considerable portion of time ; and it is continually the same, so that all accidents succeed each other in time and measure it, but they do not exhaust it, and then, as many accidents being given as it can conceive, it is always forced to suppose that these accidents, however numerous, take place in time, in a time that is sufficient for all those accidents which have not yet taken place, for all those which nature shall ever be able to produce and the imagination to invent. The notion of infinite, unlimited time, certainly cannot have been borrowed from fugitive, limited, finite sensation. It also remarks that it places all the external objects of sensation in a certain space, and that it distinguishes this space from the objects themselves ; that it places this space in one still greater, and so on to the infinite, so that innumerable worlds, taken together, measure space and do not exhaust it. That, too, is a notion of the infinite which sensation cannot have given. But there is another idea which still more evidently cannot come from sensation ; reflection perceives that every act of thought is resolved into judgments, which are expressed in propositions ; it perceives that the necessary form of every judgment, of every proposition, is a certain unity. In fact, every proposition is a unit. Whence comes this unity of proposition ? Does it come from the different terms contained in this proposition, from those terms which we must suppose are derived from sensation ? They



are, like sensation, marked by the character of variety and multiplicity; they can, therefore, be the materials of a proposition, but they are not sufficient to constitute it, since that which essentially constitutes every proposition, is the unity of proposition. Whence then comes this unity which, adding itself to the various materials which sensation furnishes, collects them and unites them at first into unity of thought and judgment, and then into unity of proposition? Reflection thus withholds unity from sensation, as it withholds from it space, time, personality, liberty, and many other ideas; and it refers to thought itself this unity without which there is no thought, no judgment, no proposition. It leaves the world of sensation, and enters into the world of thought, into that inmost and obscure world where nevertheless there are real phenomena, so real that, if you make of them an abstraction, you destroy, I do not say only a great number of our notions, but the possibility of a single notion, of a single thought, of a single judgment, of a single proposition. Reflection approaches these new phenomena; it studies them; it makes a more or less exact account of them, it examines their relations. Thus far, every thing works to a charm. I have told you the good; but here is the evil. Reflection is so struck with the reality of these new phenomena and of their difference from the phenomena of sensation, that in its preoccupation it neglects these, loses sight of them, denies them; and there results a new exclusive system which, taking its single point of departure in the ideas inherent in thought itself, is particularly called idealism, in opposition to sensualism, which takes its single point of departure in the ideas which come from sensation.

Behold in a few words the course of idealism. At first it neglects the relations which bind rational phenomena to sensitive phenomena, and passes from their difference which is real to the supposition of their independence; they are distinct, hence they are separate. The conclusion goes beyond the premises, the synthesis goes beyond the analysis. In fact, they are not separate; they coexist with the others in consciousness. The results

of the development of intelligence are there with the results of the development of sensibility, for intelligence is developed only in connection with sensibility; every thing was given you in a profound complexity; you have distinguished that which ought to have been distinguished; very well: but it is not necessary to separate that which ought not to be separated. This is the first step beyond observation, the first error of idealism. After having distinguished, it separates; it not only separates, it goes further: because certain ideas are independent of sensations, they can be anterior to them; they may be anterior, therefore they are. They are then the dowry which intelligence brings with it, they are innate in it; either they existed before it, or at least the soul, which is immortal, and which consequently could have existed before its present existence, participated in them already in another world, and ideas are nothing else than the recollections of previous knowledge. Such results are not borrowed from analysis: analysis shows that certain ideas are in themselves distinct from ideas of sensation; but of independent, anterior, innate ideas, ideas pre-existing in another world, it says not a single word; and behold idealism, having started from a true distinction, running headlong into the route of abstraction and hypothesis. Once upon this route, we rarely stop. Do you know what is the goal, what is the last consequence of idealism? Idealism has reproached sensualism with not being able to explain the idea of unity; and truly unity cannot be drawn in any manner from variety; this is evident, and confounds sensualism. But the opposite is true: as we do not draw unity from variety, no more do we draw variety from unity; and idealism once arriving at unity, goes deeply into it, and is no longer able to go out of it. Embarrassed by variety, it neglects it if it is feeble and timid, it denies it if it is strong and consistent. After having rightly rejected sensualism, that is, sensation as the only principle of knowledge, it pretends that no knowledge comes from sensation; after having rightly rejected materialism, that is, the exclusive existence of matter, it denies the existence itself of matter.

Behold, therefore, two uses of reflection, of analysis, both of which have ended at a premature synthesis, at hypotheses. And remark that these hypotheses have no want of confidence in themselves; they are profoundly dogmatical. Sensualism believes only in the authority of the senses and in the existence of matter, but it believes in these firmly; idealism believes only in the existence of spirit, and admits only the authority of the ideas which are in it: but, in fine, it believes in this existence, it admits this authority; they are two opposite dogmatisms, but equally imperious, equally self-confident. Both are founded upon data equally true. These true data, however incomplete, give them their force; they plant themselves upon these as often as they are attacked. Sensualism appeals to the testimony of the senses, idealism to that of the reason and to the authority of certain ideas, inexplicable by sensation alone. Herein sensualism and idealism are strong; but when from true but incomplete data, they draw an exclusive system, they become alike feeble. Sensualism and idealism are two dogmatisms, equally true on one side, equally false on the other, and which end at extravagances very nearly equal.

Is this the last term of reflection and philosophy? No, certainly; these two dogmatisms being opposed, they cannot appear with any splendor without coming in contact, without making war upon each other. The first is right in opposing the second, and the second is not wrong in opposing the first. The result of this strife is, that reflection, after being a moment identified with one, and then with the other, perceives the defect of both, retires from both, regains its independence, and examines, with the light alone of common sense, the foundations of these two systems, the processes which they employ, the conclusions at which they arrive. Surrounded by hypotheses, against their seductions good sense arms itself with criticism, a relentless criticism; through fear of the extravagances of dogmatism, it is thrown to the other extremity and falls into skepticism. Skepticism is the first form, the first appearance of common sense upon

the stage of philosophy. (*Applause.*) Patience, gentlemen: you see where skepticism begins; you shall soon see where it ends.

Skepticism examines, at first, the bases of sensualism, that is, the testimony of the senses, their exclusive testimony, and easily refutes it. The argumentation is known. Is every sensation by itself, infallible or not? It must be conceded that it is fallible. Now, are two sensations more infallible than one? No, and three and four are not more infallible than two. If there is a possibility that they may rectify each other, there is also a possibility that they may not rectify each other; therefore, separated or united, they are not in themselves an infallible criterion. But if sensations may be deceived, reason rectifies them. This is true; reason, ratiocination, judgment, comparison, attention, all these different faculties, intervene in sensible observation, confirm it or rectify it. But are attention, comparison, judgment, ratiocination, reason, faculties which come from sensation, or not? If they come from it, they have the same character of fallibility which it has. They do not come from it, you go beyond the system of sensation. If sensation is verified by sensation or by the reason which is derived from it, all the chances of error arising from sensation subsist; and if the operation of the mind which intervenes in the verification is different from sensation, it can in fact rectify it, but on the condition that it has an authority which is inherent in it, and then there is an end of sensualism: in either case, its foundation crumbles under this first attack of skepticism. Skepticism again says to sensualism: What is the instrument of all your system? Think of it, it is the relation of cause to effect. Your system is a perpetual generation. You engender all ideas from sensible ideas, these ideas from sensations, the sensations from the impression made upon the senses, the impression from the immediate action of exterior objects; in a word, you build every thing upon the idea of cause and effect. Now, in your world of sensations I perceive no cause. Do not go out of your system. According to this system, what do you find in you and beyond you? Different phenomena which succeed each other

is a certain accidental conjunction: you find a ball which is here after having been there, another which is there after having been here; but the reason of this fact, but the connection which gives to each one of its terms the character of an antecedent and of a consequent, how can you borrow from sensation? Sensation is a simple fact which can give nothing else than itself. You do every thing that you do with the relation of effect to cause, and you never explain and never justify this relation: you cannot. In fine, your system is dear to you as forming a very coherent whole, a real unity: but the idea of unity does not come from the senses. Thus skepticism beats into ruins the bases, the processes, the conclusions of sensualism; that accomplished, it returns to idealism, and makes no less war upon it.

It examines its bases, its processes, its results. The bases of idealism are the ideas which sensation cannot explain. Against these ideas, skepticism raises the formidable problem of their origin; and hence, it easily dissipates the chimera of ideas existing before their appearance in this world in the consciousness of man, that of innate ideas, even that of ideas entirely independent of sensation. The instrument of idealism is, in the last analysis, the human reason: skepticism examines this instrument, its value, its bearing, its limits; it demonstrates that idealism often uses it at hazard and misconceives its laws; in order to destroy the prestige of its sublime hypotheses, it is sufficient for it to oppose to them a severe criticism of our faculties. Finally, skepticism pushes idealism to its last consequences; it retrenches from it every idea that comes from the senses, since idealism weakens their authority, and it takes away from it the whole exterior world: it leaves it only a liberty which is for itself its own theatre and its own material, a spirit which acts only upon itself, and is exhausted in the solitary contemplation of its own forces and its own laws; externally, a God without a world, an absolute existence, void of diversity, of change and movement, which, concentrated in the depths of unity, strongly resembles the negation of existence.

Now let us see where skepticism ends, and what are its conclusions to itself. Its only legitimate conclusion would be that in sensualism and in idealism there are many errors. Behold the only conclusion which springs from the legitimate work of analysis applied to these two systems. Extend it, and it passes beyond the premises; synthesis passes beyond analysis, and analysis is again resolved into hypothesis. Now, reflection errs in this third case, as it did in the first two, because it is still, because it is always feeble; instead of saying: There is something false in the two systems of idealism and sensualism, skepticism says: Every thing is false in these two systems. And it not only says: Every thing is false in these two systems, but it adds: Every system is false; a new conclusion further yet from legitimate analysis than the preceding. It not only says: Every system is false, but further says: There is no attainable truth for man. And here we fall into an abyss of exaggerations, which are just as extravagant as those of sensualism and idealism. There is in this, moreover, even an intolerable contradiction. For put in its rigorous form, this last conclusion of skepticism: There is no truth, no certainty; translate it: It is true, it is certain that there can be no truth, no certainty. It is true, it is certain that there can be . . . ; but this is an evident dogmatism. It is true, it is certain. . . . What do you know, you who admit no truth, no certainty? Thus skepticism itself ends in dogmatism, and the negation of all philosophy is resolved into a system of philosophy, quite as exclusive and extravagant, even more exclusive and extravagant than any other. (*Unanimous applause.*)

It must be agreed that the human mind is herein much embarrassed. Will it consent to skepticism? but skepticism is a contradiction. Will it consent to sensualism or idealism? but sensualism and idealism have been legitimately pushed to extravagance, and thereby to skepticism. What can be done, then? I see only two expedients. First, we can renounce independence, reflection, philosophy, and enter into the circle of theology. This

is what sometimes happens ; fortunately, although the inconsistency may be visible, for the objections to skepticism, which bear against every system, cannot but be as valid against a religious system as against a philosophical system. This is a delicate point, I know, and of great importance : it is one of the battle-fields of the century, I shall return to it more than once. At this time I shall content myself with a single remark. There is a true and a false skepticism, there is a skepticism that is respectable, because it is sincere ; there is a skepticism which is only a pretence, a game played, which, having taken part beforehand against reason and philosophy, purposely exaggerates their feebleness and faults, in order to discourage men from them, and to bring men under the yoke of authority. This is not true skepticism, that is, the loyally recognized and avowed impossibility of legitimately admitting any truth ; it is the concealed hatred of reason and philosophy. This false skepticism has already appeared several times in the history of philosophy : it has the appearance of triumphing at the present time ; but I know it, I know its designs, and will strip off its mask. Wearied with the contradictions of skepticism, philosophy can then, by a new contradiction, return to theology ; or, indeed, there remains to it to try only a single road. Reflection, in occupying itself with one of the parts of consciousness, the sensational part, thus to speak, has arrived at sensualism ; in occupying itself with the intellectual part and the ideas which pertain to reason, it has arrived at idealism ; in returning upon itself, upon its powers and their legitimate employment, and upon the two systems which it had already produced, it has arrived at skepticism. But there is something more in the consciousness which it did not think of at first ; it is the fact which I have often designated to you, the fact of spontaneity. We do not start by reflection. Before reflection, all our faculties in their spontaneous energy, enter into exercise, the reason with the senses, the senses with the reason, free activity with the reason and the senses ; and their primitive and simultaneous action gives us the grand results to which I have called your attention in the preceding lec-

tures. The fact of spontaneity had thus far escaped reflection by its profundity and its intimacy ; and, nevertheless, remark well that spontaneity is precisely the basis of reflection. Spontaneity, we have seen, is the phenomenon which gives immediate birth to religion, and which indirectly, by the reflection that is applied to it, contains and engenders philosophy. Thus, by laying hold of spontaneity, reflection places itself at the source and on the limit of religion and philosophy, thereby it makes then a kind of compromise between religion and philosophy. This compromise, in a single word, is mysticism.

Sensualism did not render an account of spontaneity and primitive inspiration ; it destroyed it in resolving it into a dominant sensation. Idealism did not account for them any more ; for if it had accounted for them, it would have found in inspiration the vivid and profound source of all the truths which it had known well how to distinguish from the senses, but which, at a later period, it had, as it were, smothered under abstractions and hypotheses. Finally, skepticism had no interest in studying the spontaneous exercise of the reason which it condemned, even in its foundation and in all its modes of action, to impotence. Reflection lays hold of this hitherto unperceived fact of spontaneity, a specific fact, quite as real, quite as incontestable as others, which, by its profundity and delicacy, only demands a more attentive and finer analysis. The character of inspiration is, 1st, that it is primitive, anterior to every operation of reflection ; 2d, that it is accompanied by an unbounded faith ; 3d, that it is vivifying and sanctifying, and that it diffuses in the soul a sentiment of love for the source itself of every inspiration. Now, the source of every inspiration is, without doubt, the human reason, but the human reason bound to its principle, and speaking, thus to say, in the name of this principle ; it is this very principle making its appearance in the reason of man. Certainly this was not a fact to be neglected ; it is this admirable fact upon which mysticism works. It describes it, disengages it, elucidates it, and draws from it the treasures of truth and morality which it con-



tains. Nothing is better, every thing always commences well. But see at what mysticism ends, and at what it necessarily ends.

Inspiration has a place only in the silence of the operations of the understanding. Ratiocination kills inspiration; the attention even which we lend to it makes it languish and die. In order to find primitive inspiration, and enthusiasm, the faith, the love which accompany it, it is necessary to suspend, as far as it is in our power, the action of the other faculties. Turn this into a principle and a habit, and soon you will arrive at the disdain and the degradation of the most excellent faculties of human nature. We then care very little for the gross senses which hinder and obscure inspiration; we care very little for activity and human liberty, which, by the doubtful combats which they make against passion, fill the soul with regrets and troubles,—and cradle of virtue. To act, is to contend; to contend, is to commence by rending the heart, and sometimes, moreover, to end by succumbing. The path of action is sown with afflictions. To shun action appears more safe to mysticism. Moreover, science with its methodical allurements, its analysis and synthesis, appears little more than a laborious vanity for which truth is directly, and without effort, drawn from its most elevated source. Behold therefore the mysticism which neglects the world, virtue, and science, for interior recollection, contemplation, faith, and love; hence quietism. We are very far from the true purpose of life, and we are not, however, at the end of the aberrations of mysticism.

We wish for enthusiasm, inspirations, and contemplations: be it so; but we cannot have them every day, at all hours; gentle souls wait in silence for inspiration, energetic souls summon it. We wish to hear the voice of the spirit: the spirit's voice is tardy; we invoke it, and soon we evoke it. It comes, and the general revelation of reason is mistaken for direct and personal revelations. We call, we listen, and we believe that we hear; we have visions, and we procure them for others. We read without eyes, we hear without ears; we command the elements, without understanding their laws; the senses and the imagination, which we think we

hold enchain'd, take part with us, and from the tranquil and innocent follies of quietism we fall into the deliriums of *theurgy*, which are often criminal. I do not invent, I draw its consequences from a principle; I seem to conjecture, I am only narrating. You have seen how sensualism and idealism had commenced, and how they ended; you have seen where skepticism and its seeming good sense ended: behold where mysticism ends. You have in this the spectacle of the human spirit and its necessary aberrations.

Such are the most general processes of reflection: developed by time, they produce four systems which represent and constitute the entire history of philosophy. Doubtless these systems are combined and mixed more or less together; every thing, in reality, is complicated; but analysis easily finds under all these combinations their essential elements. Now, in what order do these systems succeed each other upon the stage of history? Do they succeed each other in the order in which I have presented them to you? Perhaps, gentlemen; perhaps, in fact, the first systems are sensualistic rather than idealistic. But what is certain is, that the two systems which first develop themselves are sensualism and idealism; they are the two dogmatisms which fill up the first plan of every great philosophical epoch. It is clear that skepticism can come only afterwards; and it is just as clear that mysticism (I mean as an independent and exclusive system) comes last; for mysticism is nothing else than an act of despair on the part of the human reason, which, forced to renounce dogmatism, not being able to resign itself to skepticism, and not wishing to abjure all independence, tries a sort of compromise between religious inspiration and philosophy.

What are the merits of these four systems, and what is their utility? Their utility is immense. I know not whether, after this lecture, I shall appear strongly prepossessed with any of these four systems; but on no account, if I were able, would I retrench a single one of them; for they are all, and almost equally, useful. Suppose that one of these systems should per-

ish: in my opinion, the same thing would happen to entire philosophy. So, I wish to reduce sensualism; I do not wish to destroy it. Destroy it, throw away the system which alone can inspire and nourish the ardent taste for physical researches, and the passionate energy which makes conquests over nature, as the only reality that is evident and worthy of the attention and the toil of man; and, that which is of the highest importance, you also throw away the contradiction of idealism which elucidates it, the salutary counterpoise which holds it back on the slippery declivity of hypothesis. Suppress idealism, even with its chimeras, and you may be sure that the study and the knowledge of human thought and its laws will suffer. And then sensualism will have too much play, and will be lost in insupportable hypotheses. If you do not wish that philosophy should soon be reduced to fatalism, to materialism, and to atheism, guard yourselves from retrenching idealism; for it is idealism which makes war upon these three consequences of sensualism, watches over them, and prevents them from triumphing. On the other hand, be very careful not to ruin skepticism; for skepticism is an indispensable adversary to all dogmatism. If there were not among mankind some who make a profession of criticising every thing, even that which is good, who search out the feeble side of the finest things, and resist every theory, good or bad, we should soon have more bad theories than good ones; conjectures would be given for certainties, and the reveries of a day for the expression of eternal truth. It is good to be always forced to guard one's self; it is good for us, makers of systems as we are, to know that we are working under the eye and under the control of skepticism, which will demand an account of the principles, the processes, the results of our work, and which, with a breath, will overturn our whole edifice, if it is not founded upon reality and severe method. The utility of mysticism is not less evident. Sensualism penetrates by means of sensation into the sensible world; its instrument is observation; it admits only what it has felt, seen, touched. Idealism penetrates into the

world of ideas, into pure reason ; its instrument is abstraction : skepticism, with its sharp dialectics, reduces to powder sensations as well as ideas, and pushes them to indifference or universal mockery. It is, then, necessary that there should be mysticism to claim the sacred rights of inspiration, of enthusiasm, of faith, of the primitive truths which neither sensation, nor abstraction, nor ratiocination give us. It is of the highest importance that there should be mysticism, that there always should be, to remind men that the physical and moral sciences, with their methods and their classifications, their divisions and subdivisions, and their somewhat artificial arrangements, are very fine without doubt, but that life is often wanting to these masterpieces of analysis, and that life has always been given to eternal verities, and to the primitive and spontaneous operation which reveals them to the ignorant as well as the wise ; a rapid and sure operation, which is dissipated and perishes under the abstraction of idealism as well as under the scalpel of sensualism, in the arid movement of dialectics and in the disputes of the school as well as in the distractions of the world, and which is found, preserved, and nourished only in the sanctuary of the soul, at the hearth of religious meditation.

Such is the utility of these four systems ; as to their intrinsic merit, accustom yourselves to this principle : they have been, therefore they have had a right to be, therefore they are true either wholly or in part. Error is the law of our nature, we are condemned to it ; and in all our opinions, in all our words, there is always a large portion of error, even absurdity. But complete absurdity does not enter into the mind of man ; it is the virtue of thought to admit nothing except on the condition that it contain some truth, and absolute error is impossible. The four systems which I have shown you have existed, therefore they contain truth ; but they are not wholly true ; they are true on one side and false on the other ; and that which I propose to you is, to reject none of them, to be the dupe of none.

Half true, half false, these four systems are the elements of all philosophy, and consequently the history of philosophy. The

history of philosophy does not create philosophical systems; it collects them and explains them. Its task is not to forget any of the great systems which the human mind has produced, and to comprehend them in referring them to their common principle, to the human mind, that mind which each one of us bears entire in himself, which each one of us therefore can study and consult, for the purpose of comprehending it in others, of comprehending every thing that has been and can be produced in them. Such is this method which it pleases certain persons to attack as a hypothetical method; it is simply observation, applied first to human nature, then transferred to history. Do you conceive in fact that we could comprehend nothing in history, except on the condition of comprehending somewhat the human mind, of which history is the manifestation? Now, the knowledge of the human mind is philosophy. It is therefore impossible to find our way in the history of philosophy, if we are not more or less philosophers, and philosophy is the true light of the history of philosophy. On the other hand, what does this do? It shows us philosophy, that is, the four systems which, in our opinion, represent it, advancing over the ages, sometimes alone, sometimes with each other, feeble at first, poor in observations and in arguments, then with time becoming enriched and fortified, and therefore developing continually the knowledge of all the elements, of all the points of view of the human spirit, that is, again philosophy. The history of philosophy, therefore, is nothing less, in its turn, than philosophy in action, realizing itself in a perpetual progress, the goal of which continually recedes like that of civilization. The result of all this is the principle which I designated to you in the introduction last year, and which is, you know, the last end of my efforts, the soul of my writings and of my teaching, to wit, the harmony of philosophy and its history, the organization of philosophy, here, by pure science, there, by history.

It seems that we are very far from the philosophy of the eighteenth century. By no means; for I have just laid its

foundations. Yes, these four systems which I have just designated to you, and have just drawn from the analysis itself of the human mind, are and cannot but be the four great elementary systems which, born in the old East, after having shown themselves with splendor on the brilliant scenes of the Greek philosophy, and having traversed, obscured but not extinguished, the long night of the middle age, reappeared, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in modern philosophy, and present in the eighteenth century, in their fertile strife, the grandest and most instructive spectacle which has ever been offered by the annals of philosophy.

## LECTURE V.

## RETURN TO THE PAST. SENSUALISM IN INDIA.

**Subject of this lecture:** Antecedents of the four systems indicated in the preceding lecture.—Oriental philosophy is reduced, in the state of our knowledge, almost to the Indian philosophy.—General view of the Indian systems.—Of sensualism in India. Sankhya school, of Kapila. Its principles, its processes, its conclusions. Indian materialism, fatalism, atheism.

I DETERMINED, in the last lecture, the four points of view which serve as the foundations for all systems, which are the necessary elements of all philosophy, and consequently of the history of philosophy, which fill up with their divisions and their combinations every great philosophical epoch, and, consequently, the eighteenth century. I must now follow these four systems in their development up to the eighteenth century, for the purpose of recognizing in what condition this century received them, and to appreciate what it made of them. I must proceed, in regard to the systems of which the philosophy of the eighteenth century is composed, as I did in regard to the method which it employed, and in regard to the spirit with which it is impressed. Here even a little less rapidity is befitting, since we are discussing the antecedents of systems which must be for us the subject of a long study; antecedents imperfectly known, and of which exact knowledge is nevertheless necessary for the full and entire intelligence of the great philosophical spectacle which the eighteenth century presents.

The East is the cradle of civilization and philosophy; history ascends as high as that, and no higher. We come from the Romans, the Romans from the Greeks, and the Greeks received from the East their language, their arts, their religion. But the East, whence does it come? What are the roots of the antique civilization of Egypt, of Persia, of China, and India? History

says nothing of it. As in reasoning it is always necessary to arrive at principles which are not explicable by anterior principles, so in history it is very necessary, absolutely necessary, that criticism should end at primitive races, and at an order of things, whatever it may be, which no longer has its roots in an anterior state, and which is explicable only by human nature and the designs of Providence. The East is, therefore, for us the point of departure for civilization and philosophy. But this word, the *East*, is very vague, because it is very complex. There are many countries in the East. Have all these countries had philosophical systems? Such is the question. I do not hesitate to answer in the negative. I think indeed that there was profound thought in the ancient worship of Egypt, under the mysterious symbols which still cover the interior of its temples, under those hieroglyphics which have at once resisted centuries and all the efforts of erudition, of which one of our most celebrated compatriots has gone to seek the key in those very places;\* but, in fine, the very name of hieroglyphics sufficiently indicates that in Egypt thought stopped at its religious envelope and did not arrive at its philosophical form. It is the same in Persia. The Zend-Avesta is full of the most important truths; it is already a sublime theology, but still it is not a philosophy. On the contrary, in China and everywhere in India, philosophy has appeared under the form and with the character which belong to it. We find in those countries more than one system of metaphysics conceived and reduced to a system after the manner of the West. But in China, the school of Confucius being excepted, which is comparatively recent and almost exclusively moral and political, the other philosophical schools, the existence of which moreover is incontestable, are shrouded in manuscripts which are interdicted to the masses: they will go out from them, I hope; but they have not yet gone out. We are indebted to certain learned men, and in particular to our skilful sinologue, M. Abel Rémusat, for ingenious

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\* M. Champollion, who was then in Egypt.



views upon some points of the Chinese philosophy; and even upon the whole of an important system.\* But if the friends of ancient philosophy received with gratitude these precious and too rare communications, they were not able to make much use of them, being compelled to accept with confidence and upon the word of their author, these almost personal discoveries, or to neglect them, not having in possession the positive documents which confirm them.† In the eighteenth century we were but little farther advanced in regard to the Indian philosophy. It was discoursed of without sense, without any solidly established basis. A few learned men talked of it among themselves, thus to speak, and still without the appearance of understanding each other; all these disputes were of very little use to the public, and we demanded that some one should be willing to do in our times for India what had been done for Greece in the sixteenth century, and that at first texts, translations, or extracts of ancient philosophy should be given, leaving dissertation and discussion to come afterwards. Finally, Colebrook, after the insufficient attempts of Ward, has just satisfied the secret wishes of the friends of philosophy. Leaving the premature, and always somewhat sterile (because they are always more or less hypothetical) dissertations on that subject, the illustrious president of the Asiatic Society of London, by exact analyses, has, in some sort, introduced us to the Indian systems, and has permitted us to appreciate them and judge of them ourselves. I declare therefore that for me, not being able to read the originals, the Oriental philosophy is reduced to the Indian philosophy, and I further declare that the Indian philosophy is for me nearly all in the papers of Colebrook,

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\* *Memoir of the Life and Opinions of Lao-Tseu*, Chinese philosopher of the sixth century before our era. Paris, 1823. And *Mélanges asiatiques*, Vol. 1st, p. 88.

† Let us publicly thank the learned successor of M. Abel Rémusat, M. Stanislas Julien, who, yielding to our earnest solicitations, has translated, with the authority attached to its incontestated exactness, the entire work of Lao-Tseu. *The Book of Life and Virtue*, etc., in-8, Paris, 1842.

inserted from 1824 to 1827 in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of London.\* Such is the authority upon which I shall constantly rely in this lecture, which will be entirely devoted to searching out what was the condition of the four great elementary systems of which the history of philosophy is composed, in their origin, in the very cradle of philosophy, that is, in the East, that is, for me, in India.

The obstacle which stops and almost discourages us when we wish to occupy ourselves with India, with its philosophy or its religion, with its laws and its literature, is the absence of all chronology. In India, the different philosophical systems have no certain date, not even a relative date.† These different systems are all cited, sometimes as authority, sometimes for the purpose of opposing them: one supposes the other, and we would say that they were all born on the same day. The probable reason of this singular phenomenon is, that the different schools of India have continually retouched the monuments upon which they are founded; and all of them having continually done the same thing in order to hold or regain the ascendancy, there has resulted an apparent simultaneousness of all the different systems, and there is the greatest difficulty in determining which preceded, which followed, and in what order they are developed. In this, as in all other things, it seems that India has wished to escape

\* One can see the extracts which M. Abel Rémusat has given in the *Journal des Savants*, December, 1825; April, 1826; March and July, 1828; and an article of M. Burnouf, filed in the *Journal Asiatique*, March, 1825. Since then the miscellanies of Colebrook have been collected in two volumes, London, 1837, in-8: and his *Essays on the Indian Philosophy* occupy from page 227 to page 419 of the first volume.

† It is necessary to except Buddhism, which will soon have its history, thanks to the great work of M. Burnouf, *Introduction to the History of Buddhism*, Vol. 1st, in-4, 1844. According to M. Burnouf, Buddhism appeared five hundred or six hundred years before our era; but this date, already so useful to remember, unfortunately throws no light on the chronology of the Brahmin systems which had endured and flourished many centuries before Buddhism came to give to the old religion and the old philosophy of India a more popular, and, in my opinion, a very inferior form.

the law of succession and time, and to give to all its works the appearance of an eternal unity. We are therefore compelled, when we are investigating the order of the development of the different systems of Indian philosophy, to use the analogies which are drawn from a comparison with the other great epochs of the history of philosophy, and the inductions which the knowledge of the invariable laws of the human spirit suggest. First, so far as analogy goes, it seems that humanity, if it resembles itself, has not been able to proceed in the East in a different manner from what it has in Greece and in the modern world. Yet, notwithstanding the number of experiments is still very limited, if a profound unity ought to be found in the different movements of humanity, it is also necessary to leave a very great part to the diversity of circumstances; and thus, in admitting this kind of proof, it must be employed with extreme circumspection. Then the human spirit is, as I have so often said, the very root of the history of philosophy; and as the human spirit has its laws, it can be developed and manifest itself only according to these laws, which become those of history. But finally, as it is not impossible that the most scrupulous philosophy may be deceived in the interpretation of the laws of the human spirit, we must always be able to put every historical induction, which has no other foundation, to the proof of well-stated facts; and when these facts, that is, the means of verification, are wanting, there must be accorded only an approximate value to the most probable inductions, and to the chronological classifications to which these inductions lead. I beg of you to accord no other value to the order in which I am about to present to you the different systems of Indian philosophy. Direct especially your attention to each one of these systems so new to us, and to the rich collection which they compose. In fact, the Indian philosophy is so vast that we can literally say, that it is an abridgment of the entire history of philosophy. Admire, therefore, in this the natural and fertile power of the human spirit, which commenced with productions so great.

I am tired of repeating, religion is the foundation of every civilization ; it is especially true of a nascent civilization, and in particular of that of India. In India, the religious books, the Vedas, are the base of every ulterior development, here of the legislation which is founded upon religious law, there of the arts which represent in their way the mythology of the Vedas ; finally, of philosophy. The Vedas were not written by any man ; in the opinion of the Hindoos, they have God himself, Brahma, for their author ; they are revealed, they command an absolute faith, they possess authority without limits. But if the human spirit in India had been at rest with the Vedas, there would have been no philosophy in India. As the Vedas are somewhat enigmatical, like every sacred monument of the first ages, the most lively faith is forced to address itself to reflection in order to get at the meaning of the divine precepts. Hence, by the aid of time, at first commentaries that are purely theological, then a school of interpretation which professes an unlimited submission to the Vedas, but which pretends to explain them to the faithful in a clearer and more intelligible manner. This school of interpretation is the Mimansa. The Vedas are *par excellence* the sacred book ; the Mimansa is a collection of books of devotion, the object of which is to draw from the Vedas the exact knowledge of religious and moral duties. The moral duties in it are only a form of religious duties ; so much so that a single word (*dharma*), taken in the masculine, designates virtue or moral merit, and taken in the feminine, devotion or the merit acquired by acts of piety. The school of the Mimansa has for its principal monument a very obscure work, which is called *Soutras*, or aphorisms. These aphorisms are divided into sixty chapters, each one of these chapters is divided into sections, and each section contains different cases of conscience ; so that the Mimansa is nothing else than a casuistry. Like every casuistry, it proceeds with the dress of a didactic method and a minute analysis. For example, a case of conscience, a complete case, is divided into five members : 1st, The subject, the matter which must be elucidated ; 2d, The doubt which is raised in regard to

this matter, the question to be resolved ; 3d, The first side of the argument, that is, the first solution which naturally presents itself to the mind ; 4th, The true response, the orthodox solution which authority gives, the rule ; 5th, An appendix which is called the relation, wherein the definite solution at which one has arrived is connected with the solutions of various other cases which have been successively presented, so as to signalize the harmony of all the solutions, and to compose of them a regular code. This school constantly relies upon the authority of the Vedas, the word of which is law, upon tradition, and even upon the words of holy personages who are supposed to have had particular illumination. It admits a sort of probabilism. In fact, all usage, even modern, presumes a lost tradition, and this probability is sufficient and makes authority, provided this usage be not in opposition to a formal text of the Vedas. The Mimansa has for its first author Djaimini ; his aphorisms are very ancient, but they have been retouched several times at different epochs, and enriched with commentaries. The school of Djaimini has always combated Indian heterodoxy ; and there is a commentator of this school, Koumarila, who, on account of his great science, enjoys the highest authority, who has been the author, or, at least, one of the most active instruments of the Buddhist persecution.

This is, therefore, a step taken beyond the Vedas, although always within the circle of theology. But the human spirit did not remain there. After the Mimansa of Djaimini, the interpretation of which is very reserved and the end entirely practical, comes, if not in the chronological order of which we are ignorant, at least in the natural order of the regular development of systems, another Mimansa, another school of sacred interpretation, which still retains something of theology, but which, by appealing continually to the authority of revelation, devotes itself to a more hardy interpretation, and ascends to the metaphysical principles of the precepts taught in the Vedas. This is the reason why, at the same time that it is called the theological Mimansa, it is also called Vedan philosophy, that is, a philosophy which is

founded upon the Vedas, the sense and the end of which it seeks, but which already forms a metaphysical system, a real school of philosophy. Its author, or, at least, he who has attached his name to the most developed exposition of its principles, is Vyasa.

After the Vedan philosophy come, or, at least, we can place after it, two systems very different from it, the Nyaya philosophy and the Veisheshika philosophy. Nyaya is ratiocination; Veisheshika is the distinction, the knowledge of the distinct parts, that is, of the elements of the world. The Nyaya philosophy is dialectics; the Veisheshika philosophy is physics. The author of the Nyaya philosophy is Gotama. It is somewhat difficult to say whether a system of logic is heterodox or orthodox. So the Nyaya philosophy has been tolerated and even accepted by Indian orthodoxy. It is not so with physics. Is this an effect of their own nature, or is it an effect of particular circumstances? The Veisheshika philosophy, the author of which is Kanada, has always had a very bad reputation in India; it is regarded as heterodox; and, in truth, I conceive it to be somewhat so, for it is a system of physics or natural philosophy which pretends to explain the world by single atoms, that is, in modern language, by simple and indecomposable molecules, which, by virtue of their own nature and certain laws that are inherent in them, move of their own accord, collect, and form bodies and this universe. The Veisheshika philosophy is, like that of Epicurus, a system of atomical and corpuscular physics.

Following, or, if you will, by the side of these two systems, comes another which is at once a system of physics, psychology, dialectics, and metaphysics, which is a universal system, a complete philosophy; it is the Sankhya philosophy: this philosophy must have come somewhat late, for it is entirely independent, and it has not even the slightest theological appearance. Sankhya signifies λόγος, ratio, account, calculation, reason, ratiocination; it is a rational theory; it is the account which the soul renders to itself of its own nature by the process of a regular

analysis.\* The author of the Sankhya philosophy is Kapila. This philosophy pushes independence even to heterodoxy; it is not only heterodox: the Sankhya of Kapila, in India, where things are called by the right name, is an avowed system of atheism, Nir-Isvara Sankhya, that is, word for word, Sankhya *sine Deo*.

Such is the first-fruit of independent philosophy in India. But it is impossible that a movement of independence should produce only a single system. So the Sankhya philosophy contains several other systems, the most important of which is the Sankhya Patandjali, that is, the school of the Sankhya whose author is Patandjali. The philosophy of Patandjali doubtless holds to the Sankhya philosophy, so far as it is equally independent. It admits even something of the Sankhya physics and dialectics, but it is completely separated from the Sankhya philosophy so far as metaphysics are concerned. Thus, the one is Nir-Isvara, *sine Deo*; the other is Sesvara, *cum Deo*: the one is not only heterodox, it is impious; the other is independent, but it is religious; the one is atheistic, the other is theistic, and theistic even to fanaticism.

With the Sankhya philosophy, in general, are connected various other sects, among others that of the Djainas and the Buddhists, which cannot be retrenched from the history of philosophy, since by the side of a mythology, which appears there as if laid on by design, is found a regular system of metaphysics, founded upon rational and purely human processes. Buddhism, incontestably Indian, since it respects the division by castes, is so heterodox, and rejects in a manner so open and so hostile the authority of the Vedas, it even so profoundly troubles the social and religious order, that against it not only have arguments been employed, as against the Sankhya of Kapila, but the sword has been drawn, the Mimansa school, eminently Brahminical, as you must indeed suppose,† has made an effort to stifle it by torture and death; and the persecution has been so atrocious that Buddhism has

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\* Colebrook: *The discovery of soul by means of a right discrimination.*

† Colebrook, *emphatically orthodox.*

been obliged to quit India, to cross the Ganges, to enter into the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and into China itself, where it became for many a philosophy which I do not understand well enough to venture to characterize\* it, and for the people an extravagant superstition: I mean the religion and the philosophy of Fô.

Such are the systems which are described in the work of Colebrook. After having recognized them by a general survey, in order to give an idea of the Indian philosophy taken as a whole, it remains to form an estimate of these systems, to search out in them the elements of every philosophy,—sensualism, idealism, skepticism, mysticism.

It is necessary to commence by retrenching from the systems submitted to our examination the Vedas, and at least the first Mimansa, the practical Mimansa; for they are religious and theological monuments, and not philosophical monuments. It is also necessary to retrench Buddhism; for if, at first, Buddhism is Indian in its origin, it is nearly foreign to India in its development. Moreover, not one of the Buddhist books has been translated; Colebrook has not had even at his disposition any of the original writings which may subsist, in Sanscrit† and in the Prakrit and Pahlî dialects, which are the dialects of the Djainas and

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\* Since the learned work of M. Burnouf, of which we have already spoken, the Buddhist philosophy is so well known that we might repeat here, with perfect assurance, that it is a degenerate branch of the Sankhya. In order to judge it we have only to ask of it what its psychology is, for psychology is the certain measure of every system. Here is that of Buddhism contained in two propositions which Burnouf has himself extracted from the Buddhist books: "1st, Thought or spirit, for the faculty is not distinguished from the subject, appears only with sensation, and does not survive it. 2d, The spirit cannot itself lay hold of itself; and in directing its attention to itself, it draws from it only the conviction of its powerlessness to see itself otherwise than as successive and transitory; two theses, adds M. Burnouf, the second of which is only the consequence of the first, and which are radically opposed to Brahminism, whose first article of faith is the perpetuity of the thinking subject."

† Houghton, an English resident at the court of Nepal, has discovered the Buddhist originals which are in Sanscrit, and from these works, generously communicated to the Asiatic Society of Paris, M. Burnouf has drawn the elements of his work.



the Buddhists; and he has drawn all the information which he gives us from the refutation of their adversaries. He thinks that confidence can be placed in them. "If, when the books themselves of the Buddhists shall have been translated, the scrupulous exactness of their adversaries," says M. Abel Rémusat,\* "shall be verified, this will be an honorable trait of character in the Brahmins, and a singularity in the history of religious and philosophical sects. In the mean time, a sound criticism counsels us to use with reserve notions that have such an origin, and not to decide definitely in regard to ideas which we know only upon the testimony of those who are interested in misrepresenting them."† There remain, then, as legitimate matter for philosophical analysis, 1st, the Vedan philosophy, which has for its author Vyasa; 2d, the Nyaya philosophy, which has for its author Gotama; 3d, the Veisheshika philosophy, which has for its author Kanada; 4th, the two Sankhya, that is, the Sankhya of Kapila and the Sankhya of Patandjali.

In these four systems, where are the four elements of the history of philosophy?

I begin with sensualism, and I ask myself whether in India is found that celebrated system, of which, in the last lecture, I traced the philosophical origin, the principles, the processes, and the conclusions. Yes, the system of sensualism is found in India: at first it would be easy for me to deduce it from the atomic physics of Kanada; but I find it more evidently still, and I find it entire in the Sankhya of Kapila. Trusting myself to your intelligence, and supposing you sufficiently enlightened by the last lecture, I am going to give you a simple analysis of sensualism, such as it is in the Sankhya of Kapila, according to Colebrook: I shall accompany this analysis with but a few rapid reflections.

The aim of every philosophical system in India is deliverance,

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\* *Journal des Savants*, July, 1828, p. 289.

† The fact has proved that Colebrook was right, and that the Brahmins had not calumniated their adversaries.

or the sovereign good, in this world or in the other, or in both, if it is possible. Such is the end of the Sankhya. And how can we arrive at the sovereign good? Not by the ceremonies of religion; not by the calculations of ordinary prudence, which thoughtfully shuns vexation and puts on its own side all the chances of good fortune; but by science. It remains to know how we can arrive at science, that is, in other words, what are our means of knowing. According to Kapila, there are two means of knowing. The first is, the sensation or the experience of external objects; the second is inference. You know this system; it passes for a very modern one, and nevertheless behold it already in India. But as we are in India, and as there all things are mingled, the school of Kapila admits a third means of knowing, legitimate affirmation,\* that is, the testimony of men, tradition, revelation,† the authority of the Vedas. It must be remarked, that the Veiseshika, the school of Kanada, rejects tradition, and that a branch of the Sankhya, the Tscharvakas, admit only a single way of knowledge, sensation. Kapila admits three, but we do not see that he makes much use of the third, and he arrives at conclusions so different from those of the Vedas, that he cannot have regarded their authority as sacred; but his school, entirely speculative, has escaped the fate of the Buddhist school.

These are the established means of knowing, by them one arrives at universal science, at the knowledge of all the principles of things. There are twenty-five‡ of these principles. To enable

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\* Colebrook, *Right affirmation*.

† *True revelation*, says Colebrook, referring to the *Karika*, one of the principal monuments of the Sankhya, Chap. 4, 5, true revelation, that which is derived from the Vedas, to the exclusion of the pretended revelations of impostors.

‡ The following are in substance the twenty-five principles of things, according to Kapila: 1st, matter, *moula prakriti*; 2d, intelligence, *bouddhi*; 3d, consciousness, *ahankara*, the belief that I am, personal conviction; 4th—8th, the five principles of sound, touch, color, taste, and smell, principles called *tanmatra*, and which produce the positive elements in which they are manifested, to wit: water, air, earth, fire, and ether; 9th—19th, eleven sensitive organs, five passive, and five for sensible action; the five instruments

you to comprehend the spirit of the philosophy of Kapila, I will cite some of them for you. For example, the following is the first principle of things, from which are derived all the other principles: prakriti, or moola prakriti, nature, "matter eternal without forms, without parts, cause material, universal, which can be induced from its effects, which produces and is not produced." These are the very terms of Colebrook. If they left any thing to be desired, if we should say that perhaps the first principle is here called matter only so far forth as it is the root of things, and that it is not impossible that this first principle may be spiritual, all doubts would be dissipated upon arriving at the second principle. In fact, this second principle is bouddhi, intelligence, "the first production of nature, the production which itself produces other principles." Therefore the first was not intelligence: intelligence is only in the second rank; it comes from matter; it is the fundamental attribute of matter. Hence the physics and the cosmology of Kapila; I leave them, and pass in course to psychology and to the twenty-fifth and last principle, the soul. From the combination of seventeen anterior principles results an animated atom of extreme tenuity and subtilty,\* a sort of compromise, says Colebrook, between a material soul and a soul entirely immaterial. Where is this soul located? In the brain; and it extends below the skull, like a flame which is elevated above the wick.† Is not this the famous craniological thought,

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of sensation, the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the skin; the five instruments of action are the vocal organ, the hands, the feet, the excretory passages, and the organs of generation. The eleventh is *manas, mens*, the spirit at once passive and active which perceives sensation and reflects it. The five exterior senses receive the impression; the spirit perceives it, reflects it, examines it; consciousness applies all this to itself, intelligence decides, and the five exterior senses execute. So there are thirteen instruments of knowledge, three internal and ten external, which are called the ten gates and the three gardens; 20th—24th, the five real elements produced by the principles enumerated above: ether, fire, air, water, and earth; 25th, the soul, pourousha.

\* This atom is called *linga*, and, as surpassing the wind in swiftness, *ati-vahika*. *Journal des Savants*, 1825, November, p. 682.

† Ibid.

of which, it is supposed, there has recently been made a wonderful discovery ?\* Well ! it is in the Sankhya of Kapila ; and even with it I find there the principle to which it is tied, the principle of irritation and excitation. In fact, I read in Colebrook that two branches of the Sankhya, the Tscharvakas and the Lokayaticas, do not distinguish the soul from the body : they think that the organs of sense, the vital functions, constitute the soul ; that intelligence and sensibility, which are not perceived, it is true, in the primitive elements of the body, earth, water, fire, air, taken separately, can indeed be found in these same elements, when they are combined so as to make a whole, an organized body. The faculty of thinking is a modification of these associated elements, as sugar and other ingredients mixed produce an intoxicating liquor, and as the betel, the arec, lime and the extract of cashoo, mixed together, acquire a certain exciting and irritating quality, which separately they did not have. So far as there is a body, there is thought with a feeling of pleasure and pain ; all this disappears as soon as the body is no more.†

Moreover, I am pleased to recognize that the Sankhya of Kapila contains excellent observations upon method, upon the causes of our errors, upon their remedies, and that retinue of wise precepts which everywhere so honorably recommend the writings of the sensualistic school. Thus Kapila analyzes with fineness and sagacity all the physical and moral obstacles which are opposed to the improvement of intelligence. He enumerates forty-eight physical obstacles, and sixty-two moral obstacles. There are, according to him, nine things which satisfy intelligence, and in which it can find repose ; but, above these, there are eight which elevate and perfect it. Kapila recommends us to be docile pupils of nature, which, by sensations, furnishes us with the material of all our thoughts ; and at the same time he recommends us not to

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\* Allusion to the doctrine and the language of a book which appeared at that time, *De l'irritation*, by M. Broussais.

† I here borrow the translation of M. Abel Rémusat, *Journal des Savants*, 1828, July, p. 398.

be passive pupils, but pupils who know how to interrogate, and who, instead of holding themselves to the first words of the master, skilfully draw from him the most luminous and extensive explanations. It is by relying upon nature and experimental data that man, with the power of induction which belongs to him, can arrive at legitimate knowledge. Kapila compares man and nature, in the mutual need which they have of one another, in order to arrive at truth, to a blind man and a cripple who unite together, one to be supported, the other to be guided. Nature, again says Kapila, is likened to a female dancer, exhibiting herself to soul as to an audience, and is reproached with shamelessness for repeatedly exposing herself to the rude gaze of the spectator; she desists, however, when she has sufficiently shown herself. He desists because he has seen her. Under the simplicity and freedom of this language, do you not find something of the grandeur of that of Bacon?

One of the ideas which are most opposed to sensualism is that of cause: so Kapila made an effort to destroy it. The argumentation of Kapila is, in the history of philosophy, the antecedent of that of *Ænesidemus* and that of Hume. According to Kapila, there is no proper notion of cause, and that which we call a cause is only an effect in its relation to the cause that precedes it, which is also an effect for the same reason, and continually thus, so that the whole is a necessary concatenation of effects, without veritable and independent cause. Let us observe the three following arguments:

1st, That which does not exist cannot, by any possible operation of cause, arrive at existence. Is not this the axiom since so celebrated: *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, etc., that is, the principle of the Greek atheism?

2d, The nature of cause and effect well examined is the same, and that which appears cause is only effect;

3d, It is not necessary to be occupied with causes, but with effects; for the existence of effect measures the energy of cause: therefore effect is equivalent to cause.

And at what does this argumentation end? You have already seen Kapila, starting from sensation and applying induction only to that, ending at materialism. Here the negation of all true and independent cause conducts him to fatalism and, at the same time, to atheism. Kapila does not seek to disguise this last result. Here is, word for word, the expression of Colebrook. Kapila denies the existence of a God who governs the world; he maintains that no proof of his existence can be given, that there is no proof of it, either perceived by the senses, or drawn from sensation by induction and ratiocination, and which, consequently, falls under any of our legitimate means of knowing. He indeed recognizes an intelligence; but the intelligence of which I have spoken to you, the intelligence that is an offspring of nature and an attribute of matter, a sort of soul of the world. Such is the only God of Kapila. And this intelligence is so identified with the world, is so far from being an independent God, that Kapila, who always goes to the extent of his principles, declares that it is finite, that it commenced with the world, that is, with the collection of bodies, that it is developed with the world, that it will end with the world. Here is the fundamental dilemma upon which rests the atheism that is derived from the sensualism of Kapila. One of two things: you either suppose a God distinct from the world, separated from nature, and then such a being would have no reason for producing a world foreign to himself; or you suppose this God in the world itself and in the ties of nature, and then he could not have produced it.\*

Thus the Sankhya of Kapila starts from the principles of all sensualism, employs the processes of all sensualism, and ends at the conclusions of all sensualism, that is, at materialism, at fatalism, at atheism. At our next meeting we will review the other Indian systems.

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\* *Journal des Savants*, 1825, November, p. 692.

## LECTURE VI.

## IDEALISM, SKEPTICISM, MYSTICISM IN INDIA.

**Idealism in India. Nyaya. Vedanta.—Skepticism.—Mysticism. Sankhya school of Pantadjali.—Of the Bhagavad-Gita, as belonging to this school. Its method; its psychology; its morality; its theodicea. Means of uniting one's self with God; ecstasy.—Magic.**

In the last lecture we recognized sensualism in India, let us see to-day whether we shall equally find there idealism, skepticism, and mysticism. Let us commence by idealism.

Yes, idealism is also in India; I find manifest traces of it even in the Nyaya dialectics, the author of which is Gotama. The Nyaya, simply as dialectics, might have remained neutral between sensualism and idealism, and yet it contains already a philosophy entirely opposed to the sensualism of the Sankhya of Kapila. In order to be able to judge of it better, it is necessary that you should know more of the system of the Nyaya.

The Vedas, in a certain place, say that there are three conditions of knowledge: first, it is necessary to call things by the terms which the Vedas employ, terms sacred and revealed like the Vedas; secondly, it is necessary to define things, that is, to seek what are their properties and characteristics; thirdly, it is necessary to examine whether these definitions at which we have arrived are legitimate or illegitimate. The Nyaya is founded upon this passage of the Vedas, and takes the liberty of yielding itself to a hardy system of dialectics, nevertheless without going out of the consecrated circle of Indian orthodoxy; hence the whole Nyaya philosophy. It is contained in short aphorisms, *Soutras*, divided into five books or lectures, each of which is divided into

two daily lessons. I will only designate to you the most important points.

In the first place, these sacred terms are the fundamental terms upon which human languages hinge, the terms which express the most simple ideas, that is, the most general points of view under which the human mind can consider things. And what are these simple ideas, these general points of view. There are six of them, according to the most accredited opinion, in the school of the Nyaya. These are substance, quality, action, the common (the general, genus), property (species, the individual), and relation. Some authors add a seventh element, privation or negation; others add two more still, power and resemblance. In fact, whatever you would consider, you are unable to consider except under some one of these relations. Either this object appears to you a substance, or it appears to you a quality; it appears to you active or passive, general or particular, provided or unprovided with certain forces, like or unlike something else. These are the most general points of view, the most simple elements of thought, the terms to which all the others can be referred. Does not this remind you of the categories of Aristotle?

The second point of the Nyaya to which I call your attention is that in which there is a discussion of evidence or our means of knowing. There are four: immediate perception or sensation, induction, analogy, finally legitimate affirmation, that is, tradition, revelation, the authority of the Vedas. Among these four means of knowing, induction plays a very great part in the school of dialectics. Now, induction is necessarily composed of different terms. According to the Nyaya, a complete induction is the entire development of an argument in five terms. They are as follows, with the example of Colebrook:

1st, The *proposition*, the thesis which we wish to prove: This mountain is on fire;

2d, The *reason*, the principle upon which the argument rests: for it smokes;



3d, The *example*: now, that which smokes is on fire, as the fire of the kitchen;

4th, The *application*, the application to the special case under consideration: it is the same with the mountain which smokes;

5th, The *conclusion*: therefore this mountain is on fire.

Such is the entire argument which is particularly called Nyaya, to wit, complete ratiocination; and it would seem that the dialectic school of Gotama received its name from the very argument which is the masterpiece of dialectics. But these five terms of the Nyaya are not always enumerated and are reduced to the last three: "That which smokes is on fire, as the fire of the kitchen; it is the same with the mountain which smokes: therefore this mountain is on fire." Thus reduced, the Nyaya is little less than a regular syllogism. Such is, at least, the opinion of Colebrook, whom we ought to follow, since we do not understand the original monument.\* Therefore, with the categories, the syllogism is also found in India. Hence the following historical problem: Does the peripatetic syllogism come from India, or has India borrowed it from Greece? Are the Greeks the teachers or the disciples of the Hindoos?† This is a premature problem which, in the existing state of our knowledge, is entirely insolvable. While waiting for new lights to come to elucidate the communications which may have taken place between India and Greece in the time of Alexander, or at some other epoch as yet unknown, we must be resigned to attribute the syllogism, and without doubt also the categories, in India as well as in Greece, to the human mind and its natural energy. But if the human mind has indeed been able to produce the syllogism in India, it has not been able to produce it in a day; for the syllogism sup-

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\* A learned memoir of M. B. Saint-Hilaire has demonstrated that the Nyaya does not contain the true theory of the syllogism, and that Colebrook has much exaggerated the analogy, which, upon certain points, the system of Gotama can present, with this theory; *Memoires de l'Acad. des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, t. 3, p. 223 and following.

† M. Abel Rémusat, *Journal des Savants*, 1826, April, p. 286.

poses a long period of intellectual culture. There is a major proposition in every act of reasoning, whatever it may be, oral or tacit, instinctive or developed ; and it is this major proposition clearly or confusedly perceived which directs the mind ; but the mind does not always account to itself for this, and the essential operation of ratiocination remains a long time buried in the depths of thought. In order that analysis may there search it out, disengage it, transfer it to the light, and assign to it its legitimate place in an exterior mechanism which reproduces and faithfully represents the internal movement of thought, there must be years added to years, there must be an accumulation of efforts ; the single fact of the existence of the regular syllogism in the dialectics of the Nyaya would be an unanswerable demonstration of the high degree of intellectual culture which India must have attained. The regular syllogism supposes a very advanced culture, and at the same time augments it. In fact, it is impossible that the form of thought should not have an influence on thought itself, that the decomposition of the process of reasoning into the three terms which constitute it should not render more distinct and more sure the perception of the relations of agreement or disagreement which unite or separate them. The major, the minor, and the consequence, placed thus face to face, manifest, of themselves, their true relations ; and their precise enumeration and their regular disposition oppose the introduction of very chimerical relations, and almost dissipate them and the phantoms with which the imagination fills up the intervals of reasoning. The rigor of the form is reflected on the operation which it expresses ; it is communicated to the language of reasoning, and soon to general language itself. Hence, little by little, the habits of severity and precision which pass into every mental production, and exert a powerful influence upon the development of intelligence. Thus, the appearance of the regular syllogism in philosophy has constantly been the sign of a new era for methods and for sciences. Do not object to me scholasticism ; for that which made the impotence of

scholasticism, was by no means the employment of the syllogism, it was, in the syllogism, the forced admission of artificial major propositions. But between these artificial major propositions and the conclusions which it drew from them, scholasticism displayed a very great dialectical power, and it impressed on the human mind habits by which modern philosophy has profited. What has modern philosophy done? It has overturned the major propositions of scholasticism, and in their place has put those which a free analysis has supplied. And then, adding to these new major propositions, which are the products of the new times, the vigor of reasoning which had given to the world scholastic dialectics, there has sprung from it the modern method, to wit, the intimate union of observation and reasoning. You see at what epoch in Greece, appeared the syllogism, or rather the promulgation of its laws. It appeared with the age of Pericles, with Plato, above all with Aristotle; now, it cannot be denied that the perfection of method and of philosophical language among the Greeks dates from this epoch. If we may put confidence in M. Abel Rémusat, the old Chinese philosophy did not pass beyond the enthymeme; it did not arrive at the regular syllogism, and it seems that it was not with impunity that the syllogism was a long time wanting to it. In the East it is found only in India, and it supposes there, I repeat, a high degree of previous culture, to which it must have added still more.

I hasten to arrive at the third point which I wish to designate to you in the Nyaya, and which leads directly to the end which I propose.

After having treated of the elements of thought, of proof, and of the most cultivated form of reasoning, the Nyaya undertakes to join example to precept; it attempts to apply our means of knowing to the objects of knowledge; hence twelve questions which, completely resolved and exhausted, end at twelve theories. And what is the first of these questions? To what are the Nyaya dialectics first applied? Is it here as in the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila, and do we find the soul, for example, in the

seventeenth rank, and as the result of the combination of seventeen anterior principles? No; Colebrook testifies that the first question which the Nyaya dialectics undertake and solve is that of the soul. This first rank given to the soul, this preference, already augurs well. Moreover, what is the result in which the Nyaya dialectics applied to the soul end? It is that the soul is distinct from the body, from its elements and its organs. Already, you see, we are in a quite different philosophy from that of Kapila. Let us pursue it. "The soul is entirely distinct from the body; it is infinite in its principle, and while it is infinite in its principle, it is a special substance, different in each individual; it has special attributes, as knowledge, will, desire, attributes which are not alike in all the substances, and which constitute a special existence for the being who experiences them." This is, indeed, an avowed spiritualism. If you continue, you will find still other signs. For example, in speaking of time, the Nyaya, even while showing that the origin of the idea of time comes from the succession of events, declares that if events succeed each other in time, they do not constitute it, and that time has a principle quite different from the succession of events, a principle which is one, eternal, infinite. It is the same in regard to space. The idea of space is indeed given us by the relation of the position of bodies, but this relation of the position of bodies, in order to be the origin and the occasion of the idea of space, is not the principle of space in itself. Space in itself, like time, is one, infinite, eternal.\*

It is therefore clear that spiritualism is found in India, and even in the Nyaya dialectics. But it is a spiritualism at once very incomplete, and very wise. Is it the last term of idealism in India? No; and if I could expose to you with some detail another system which I indicated to you in my last lecture, the Vedan philosophy, you would see that idealism has had in India

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\* On time and space, see especially the 8d Vol. of this Series, Lectures 17 and 18.

a development quite as great as sensualism, and that as soon as it became a system, it did not escape the rashness and extravagance which, in every system, seem attached to human weakness.

The Vedan philosophy is the idealistic philosophy of India ; it is, therefore, the most obscure. As Colebrook has reserved this philosophy for the last subject of his works, this last paper has not appeared, and I do not like to speak of the Vedan philosophy when I can speak to you only cursorily, upon the faith of authors who have not the authority of Colebrook. Fortunately, in announcing his future paper, the illustrious Indianist gives us in a few words, the result of his researches upon the Vedan philosophy, and this result suffices for our object. He expressly declares that "the Vedan philosophy is nothing else than a system of psychology and subtle metaphysics which even denies the existence of matter." This conclusion suffices for us ; it is foolishly idealistic ; therefore, the whole system, which Colebrook has not yet made known to us, must contain, more or less developed, all the follies which are expressed by its last result.\*

Thus idealism in India has not been more fortunate than sensualism ; the philosophy of Vyasa and that of Kapila have arrived at equal extravagances ; and India has possessed the two excessive dogmatisms which fill up the first plan of every great epoch of the history of philosophy. That these two dogmatisms have there been combated, is again attested by Colebrook ; it is seen in the numerous commentaries on the Sankhya and the Vedanta, which wage perpetual war upon each other. From this draw the conclusion, that there must also have been more or less skepticism in India ; for it is impossible that two opposite dogmatisms should combat each other without mutually staggering the faith of each other, and without causing grave doubts to arise

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\* Since, the article on the Vedan philosophy has appeared, and it fully justifies our conjectures. See the collection of Colebrook's papers on the Indian philosophy, in his *Miscellanies*, London, 1837.

in regard to the perfect soundness of either system. There *was*, in fact, skepticism in India. But remark that the philosophy of India is only the first epoch of the history of philosophy, the rich and powerful beginning, but in fact the beginning of the human mind, and that the human mind cannot begin by skepticism, but by dogmatism; consequently it is dogmatism which must have prevailed in India, and skepticism must have found there only a feeble place. This is what reasoning says; it is also what facts say.

Without speaking of skepticism and of the profound indifference into which the pandits, the learned men of modern India, have fallen, if we may put confidence in travellers; as to ancient India, I find in the extracts from Colebrook a certain number of passages which bear testimony to considerable skepticism; there is especially one passage, which I wish to cite, borrowed from a celebrated commentary on the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila, the Karika. The following, according to the Karika, is definitive truth, absolute truth, sole truth:

“Neither I am, nor does aught mine nor I exist.”

Behold, therefore, in India absolute nihilism, the last fruit of skepticism. Nevertheless, I am constrained to remind you that this is only a phrase of the Karika, and isolated phrases do not constitute a system: Colebrook does not speak of any Indian school which is positively skeptical. Skepticism is found only here and there in certain parts of systems, in other respects dogmatical, and particularly in the Sankhya of Kapila; so that it would seem that the small amount of skepticism which exists in India comes from the sensualistic philosophy. To establish this is not without interest for the history of the formation of different systems.

But if there has been little skepticism in India, there has been there a superabundance of mysticism. Let us endeavor to fix, as far as may be, the origin of this mysticism, in order to comprehend well its nature.

You recollect that the Sankhya is a school of independent philosophy; you recollect that in the bosom of this vast school is the particular school called the Sankhya of Kapila, which pushes independence even to heterodoxy, heterodoxy even to impiety, and which, being sensualistic in its principles, ends at fatalism, at materialism, at atheism, and ends there knowingly and voluntarily. But the Sankhya has not only produced the sensualistic philosophy of Kapila, it has produced many other systems; there are very different branches, among others one which, setting out from the Sankhya, that is, from the very trunk of heterodoxy, whether through weariness of the miserable dogmatism of sensualism, or for some other cause, attached itself, in the course of time, to the ancient orthodoxy, to the Vedan philosophy, to the Mimansa, and to the Vedas; which even, falling from one excess into another, as the human mind always does, joined itself to that which is most mythological in India, to the Pouranas; hence the Sankhya-pouranika philosophy. Does not this school represent to you that critical moment in the development of the human mind, when, after the strife of two dogmatisms and the more or less considerable appearance of skepticism, the human mind, wearied with believing in the follies of idealism and sensualism, but always feeling the necessity of believing, then throws itself back, in order at least to believe in something, under the yoke of the fixed and regular ancient orthodoxy? Whatever this doubt may be, there is another school which equally springs from the Sankhya, but which rejects fatalism, materialism, and atheism; it is the Sankhya of Patandjali, of which I have spoken to you heretofore. Since this school is theistic, it is no longer hostile to the ancient orthodoxy; but because it is still Sankhya, if it is no longer impious, it remains independent, it remains in the regions of philosophy. And what is the theism of the Sankhya of Patandjali? Have we arrived at true philosophy, at that which will be wise enough not to be sensualistic and to remain independent? No: I read in Colebrook that the theism of Patandjali is an absurd fanaticism. The Sankhya philosophy of

Patandjali is found in a collection called *Yoga-Soutras*, and divided into four books. The following are the titles of these books, as Colebrook gives them; first book, *On contemplation*; second book, *On the means of succeeding in it*; third book, *On the exercise of the higher powers*; fourth book, *On ecstasy*. Nothing is clearer; it is mysticism, with what is better, that is, with theism and independence, but also with what is most extravagant, that is, the substitution of ecstasy for the regular processes of reasoning, and the pretension to higher powers.

But we have here more than Colebrook himself, we possess a Patandjali monument; I mean the Bhagavad-Gita.

William Humboldt is the first, I believe, who, in 1826, in his profound analysis of the Bhagavad-Gita, supposed that this work might belong to the Sankhya of Patandjali. This simple supposition of Humboldt is now, at least for me, a certainty; for at the present time, thanks to the papers of Colebrook, we have in hand all the systems of the Indian philosophy; now, the Bhagavad-Gita contains one which does not accord with any of those which Colebrook traces for us, unless with the Sankhya of Patandjali: a close analysis will demonstrate it to us.

The Bhagavad-Gita\* is an episode of the Mahabharata, an immense national epopee, the subject of which is the quarrel of the Kourous and the Pandous, two branches of the same family, one of which, after having been expelled by the other, undertakes to return into its native country and to establish there its authority. God is on the side of the ancient exiled race, the Pandous, and protects their representative, the young Ardjouna; he accompanies him, without his knowing who this Crishna is that is with him in his chariot and serves him almost like a charioteer. The episode of the Bhagavad-Gita takes up the action when Ardjouna arrives upon the field of battle. Before giving the signal for the combat, Ardjouna contemplates the ranks of the enemy, he finds

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\* We have already indicated the spirit of the Bhagavad-Gita, Vol. 1st of this Series, Lecture 3.



there only brothers, relatives, friends, whom he must make bite the dust, in order to succeed to empire; and at this sight, at this idea, he falls into a profound melancholy; he declares to his companion that at such a price empire and life itself have no charm for him; for of what use are empire and life, when those with whom we would share empire and pass our life shall be no more? He is ready to abandon his enterprise. His impassible companion chides him, and reminds him that he is Shatriya, that he belongs to the caste of warriors; that war is his element and his duty, and that if he turns back he loses not only empire, but honor. These reasons not appearing to make much impression on the soul of Ardjouna, his mysterious companion then appeals to a higher motive, and in order to decide him to fight exposes to him a system of metaphysics. A treatise of metaphysics, before a battle, in eighteen Lectures, under the form of a dialogue between Ardjouna and his companion Crishna, such is the Bhagavad-Gita. This curious monument was translated in England in 1785, by Wilkins, and his translation is much esteemed. In 1787, it was translated from the English into French by the Abbé Parraud, who disfigured and spoiled the beautiful work of Wilkins. In 1823, William Schlegel published anew the text already published in India, and he gave of it, for the first time, a perfectly literal Latin translation. It is on this translation, carefully compared with the critical remarks of M. de Chezy,\* that I constantly rely in the philosophical analysis which I am about to present you of the Bhagavad-Gita. I shall follow it step by step, but I shall consider it only in its relation to the end that concerns me, the development of the different points of view of mysticism. I call your attention especially to the course and the progress of these points of view. You see how the human mind, in its excellence, always starts well, and how, by feeble-

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\* *Bhagavad-Gita, id est sanctiorum filios, sive almi Crishna et Ardjouna colloquium de rebus divinis, Barathos episodium, recensuit.* . . . A. G. Schlegel, Bonnæ, 1823.—Article of M. de Chezy, *Journal des Savants*, January, 1825, p. 37.

ness, it deviates little by little from the right path, and engages in the most deplorable extravagances.

The peculiarity of all mysticism is to separate itself from science, to turn aside from all regular study, and to run into contemplation. Thus the mysterious preceptor of Ardjouna speaks to him with disdain of the knowledge which is acquired from books; he speaks to him even with lightness of the sacred books, the Vedas. He mocks at the religious law which recommends a thousand ceremonies\* and promises recompense in another world; and he attacks the theological subtleties† to which his interpretation gives rise. He treats as extravagant those who hold to the letter of the Vedas, and who pretend there is no certainty elsewhere.‡ He even says that the holy books themselves, like other books, are good only for those who are not capable of true contemplation, and that when we have arrived at contemplation, the holy books are entirely useless. "As a well, a fountain, with its waters more or less stagnant, is useless when we have access to a living spring, so all the sacred books are useless to the true theologian,"§ that is, to the mystic and inspired theologian.

Behold, then, war declared against books, against theology, against science, against the methodical and regular employment of reasoning, and the prescription of recollection and of interior contemplation. Such are, in some sort, the prolegomena of mysticism: behold now, in Western language, its psychology. Already its character is there more manifest.

The Bhagavad-Gita expressly teaches that, in the hierarchy of

\* Schlegel, p. 186. "*Rituum varietate abundantem. . . . Sedem apud superos finem bonorum prædicantes. . . .*"

† Ibid., p. 187. "*Quando mens tua præstigiæ ambages exsuperaverit, tunc pervenies ad ignorantiam omnium quæ de doctrina sacra disputari possunt vel disputata sunt; subtilitatum theologicarum quando incuriosa mens tua steterit manetque in contemplatione, tunc devotio tibi obtinget.*"

‡ Ibid., p. 186. "*Insapientes librorum sacrorum dictis gaudentes, nec ultra quidquam dari affirmantes.*"

§ It is thus at least that I understand this phrase from the translation of Schlegel, pp. 186, 187. "*Quot usibus inservit puteus, aquis undique confluentibus, tot usibus præstant universi libri sacri theologo prudenti.*"

the human faculties, the soul is above sensibility, that above the soul is intelligence, and that there is something still above intelligence,—being.\* But being above intelligence, is being without intelligence, is being, substance, without any spiritual attribute, as well as without sensible attribute, since being is above sensation as well as above thought; it is therefore at first an abstraction, for a substance is no more given us without an attribute, than an attribute without a subject; consequently, a substance without essential attribute, is a substance which lends itself equally to every possible attribute, which admits as accidental attribute matter as well as spirit, and can serve as subject for all phenomena indistinctly. All this, perhaps, seems of little importance to you. Let us proceed, and what has seemed obscure or indifferent in psychology becomes important and is made clear in morals. If in the intellectual order contemplation is superior to the regular employment of reason, if being in itself is superior to thought, it follows that in the moral order what responds better to pure contemplation and to the state of being in itself, to wit, inaction, and absolute inaction, will necessarily be superior to action. Thus nothing is less indifferent than what takes place on the heights of metaphysics; therein are the principles of every thing else; thence, by a concealed, but irresistible descent, are derived in morals the most admirable or the most absurd results. Follow the series of strange, but necessary consequences, whither, in practice, the more or less importance given by psychology to substance in itself or to thought, leads.

Every thing always commences well, and the preceptor of Ardjouna does not at first recommend to him inaction, that which would shock the common sense and the manly habits of the young Shatrya; but he recommends him to act with purity, that is, without seeking the advantages of his action, to act by the simple consideration of duty, let come as a consequence what

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\* Schlegel, p. 142. "*Sensus pollentes, sensibus pollentior animus anima, autem pollentior mens; qui vero præ mente pollet, is est.*"

may. This is disinterestedness, internal purity. Surely nothing is better; but the descent is slippery, for purity is modest, it must shun every occasion of declension; as we are never more sure of not acting evilly than when not acting at all, we soon go from disinterestedness to abstinence, and from abstinence to inertia. Thus, after having recommended Ardjouna to act without considering the results of the action, soon Crishna gives him, as the ideal of human wisdom, inaction in action.\* Since it is necessary to act in this world, it is necessary to act at least as if we were not acting, and to cultivate above all the interior life, the contemplative life, very superior to active life; for works are inferior to devotion, to faith.†

Behold another step, a new maxim; it is very grave; nevertheless it can still be vindicated. In fact, an action has no moral value; it is morally good or bad so far as it is done in view of good, with the wish and the knowledge of good, which, from its nature, is essentially moral and religious; it is good only by the moral sentiment, the religious sentiment, the faith which is attached to it. Faith is, therefore, the principle of moral action; the power and the depth of the one measure the goodness of the other; it is therefore superior to it. In this sense, and with these necessary reservations, it would not be absurd to say that faith is superior to works. But mysticism does not stop there; it elevates faith so much above works, that it abases works, and inspires disdain of them.

"In this world, the true devotee disdains all action." What! all action, good as well as bad, true virtue as well as false? Yes, in this world the true devotee disdains all actions, good as well as bad.‡ Behold us then arrived at contempt of works. Once there, the descent is rapid towards all follies, the most perverse

\* Schlegel, p. 144. "Qui in opere otium cernit et in otio opus, is aspit inter mortales."

† Ibid., p. 187. "Longe inferiora sunt opera devotione mentis."

‡ Ibid., p. 187. "Mente devotus in hoc sevo utraque dimittit, bene et male facta."

folies. From indifference of works and from the absolute price of faith springs this principle, which, for the sake of clearness and brevity, I here again put in the language of the West: Faith without works sanctifies and beatifies the soul. This is the first principle; the following is a second which springs from the first: When faith is complete, it sanctifies and beatifies, not only without works, but in spite of works; and if faith is every thing, if God regards only faith and disdains all action, it follows that good actions are to him as indifferent as the bad, and that the bad even, if they are done with contempt for them, are not to him more disagreeable than the good, and that, in fine, with faith we may arrive at holiness and at beatitude, in spite of sin. I do not invent, I translate. Hear Crishna: "He who has faith has science, and he who has science and faith, attains, by that alone, to supreme tranquillity . . . ." \* "He who in the midst of devotion has laid aside the burden of action, and who has solved every doubt with science, he is no longer fettered with works." † Though you were contaminated with sins, you would be able to cross the abyss in the bark of wisdom. Know, Ardjouna, that as the natural fire reduces the wood to ashes, so the fire of true wisdom consumes all action." ‡ "I am the same for all beings; no one is worthy of my love or my hatred; but those who serve me are in me as I am in them. The greatest criminal, if he gives me his undivided service, is thereby purified and sanctified." §

There is wanting to all this only a last consequence, the dogma

\* Schlegel, p. 145. "Qui fidem habet, adipiscitur scientiam; huic intentus . . . ad summam tranquillitatem pervenit."

† Ibid., p. 146. "Eum qui in devotione opera sua deposuit, qui scientia dubitationem discidit spiritalem, non constringunt vinculis opera."

‡ Ibid., p. 145. "Si vel maxime omnibus peccatis sis contaminatus, universalis scientiæ saltu tamen infernum trajicies; deinde ut ligna accensus ignis in cinerem vertit, O Ardjuna, pariter scientiæ ignis omnia opera in cinerem vertit."

§ Ibid., p. 160. "Æquabilis ego erga omnia animantia; nemo mihi est vel invisus vel carus; at me qui colunt religiose, insunt mihi et ego iis insum. Si vel admodum facinorosus me colit cultu non aliorum distracto, is probus est estimandus, is utique recte compositus."

of predestination, destructive of all liberty and all morality. It is in the Bhagavad-Gita: "The presumptuous thinks himself the author of his actions; but all his actions come from the force and from the necessary concatenation of things."\* An irresistible fate, good or evil, causes some to be born for good, others for evil.† All men are born under the empire of one or the other of these two destinies. Not only are we predestinated to good or to evil, but we are predestinated to error or to truth, to bad philosophy or to good; and in the Bhagavad-Gita, Crishna, that is, God, makes a real tirade against bad philosophers who wander from contemplation and engage in action, and end at materialism and at atheism; he places them among the men who are born under a bad destiny.‡ We may indeed think that good fortune and bad fortune are determined beforehand, as well as virtue and vice, error and truth; but as all this is only a lottery, as we are never sure, with the best intentions in the world, of having drawn a prize, Ardjourna trembles (and in fact the moment was weighty, they were on the eve of battle); he regards with fright his singular interlocutor, who, with a powerful and serene look, reassures him in saying to him: "Take courage again, O Pandou, for you were born under the good destiny."§

The result of this moral theory, therefore, is an absolute quietism, a complete indifference, renunciation of action and ordinary life, and immobility in contemplation. "Delivered from all care of action, the true devotee rests tranquilly seated in the city with nine gates (the body), without disturbing himself and without disturbing others."|| He retires within himself, "as a turtle draws itself up in its shell;"¶ he is "like a solitary lamp which

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\* Schlegel, p. 141. "Naturæ qualitativis peraguntur omni modo opera; sua fiducia qui fallitur, eorum seipsum auctorem esse arbitratur."

† Ibid., pp. 178, 179.

‡ Ibid., p. 179, *passim*.

§ Ibid., p. 177. "Noli morerere! divina sorte natus tu es, O Panduida!"

|| Ibid., p. 177. "Cunctis operibus animo dimissis commode sedet temperans mortalis in urbe novem portis instructa, neque ipse agens nec agendi auctor."

¶ Ibid., p. 188. "Sicuti testudo."

burns calmly when protected from all agitation of the air;"\* "that which is night for others is the watch of the sage, and the watch of others is his night."†

Such is true wisdom, true devotion, true holiness, that is, *Yoga*; and as this perfect wisdom is the aim of the Sankhya of Patandjali, this system is called *Yoga*, and he who practices it *Yogui*. The true *Yogui* is also *Mouni* and *Sannyassi*, that is, a recluse. Among the attributes of wisdom is the perfect detachment of all affection for any thing whatever, for wife, for children; and there is even no question of country. The *Yogui* is indifferent to every thing. "The Brahmin full of wisdom and virtue, the ox, the elephant, the dog, and man, are all alike to the sage."‡ In fact, what is the sole exercise of the sage? Contemplation, the contemplation of God. And what is this God? We have seen what, the abstraction of being. But the abstraction of being, without fixed attribute, is realized quite as well in a dog as in a man; for there is being in every thing, as Leibnitz has said, there is being in a clod of earth as well as in the soul of the last of the Brutuses. The indifference of the *Yogui* is, therefore, consistent; he searches only for God, but he finds him equally in every thing. Only, in order to contemplate him in all things, make an abstraction of that which is not him; it is only the substance of things, pure being, that it is necessary to consider; and as the end of contemplation is to unite ourselves to God, the means of arriving at this union is to resemble him as much as possible, that is, to reduce ourselves to pure being, by the abolition of all thought, of every interior act; for the least thought, the least act would destroy the unity in dividing it, would modify and alter the absolute substance. This state of the artificial absorption of

\* Schlegel, p. 150. "Sicuti lucerna citra venti impetum posita, haud vacillat." (The French translation is from M. de Chezy.)

† Ibid., p. 138. "Quæ nox est cunctis animantibus, hanc pervigilat abstinentens; quæ vigilant animantes, hæc est nox verum intuentis anachoretæ."

‡ Ibid., p. 147. "In brachmane doctrina et modestia prædito, in bove, in elephante, tunc etiam in cane atque homine qui canina carne vescitur, sapientes idem cernunt."

the soul in itself, this suppression of every internal and external modification, and, consequently, of consciousness, and consequently of memory, is ecstasy. Ecstasy is the end of contemplation; it is to this that the Yogui tends, he aspires to annihilate himself in God.\* Now, there are means, and even physical means, of arriving at ecstasy. I do not wish to enter here into all the prescriptions that are given in the Bhagavad-Gita; I will designate to you only the last, which is to hold the breath,† through fear of arriving at consciousness of self, and, to be contented with pronouncing, I am mistaken, with murmuring the word, I am again mistaken, the simple mystic monosyllable which represents the very idea of God.

The interlocutor of Ardjouna, after having thus prepared him, and having developed in him interior sight and the sense of divine contemplation, finally raises the veils which surround him, and then is no longer a charioteer, a companion, a friend, it is God himself who is revealed to the hero Ardjouna. But, since God is being in itself without fixed attribute, it follows that he is in every thing, and that every thing is in him; that he is every thing, and that every thing is he, and that he has myriad upon myriad of forms. He reveals them to Ardjouna. He shows himself to him successively as creator, as preserver, as destroyer, as spirit, as matter; he manifests himself in the greatest things and in the least, in the holiest and in the grossest. Hence, in the Bhagavad-Gita, a dithyrambic enumeration of the qualities of God; an enumeration which almost endlessly unfolds itself with the sublime simplicity of Oriental poetry, and of which the length, the monotony at once and the variety, produce at first only an admirable poetic effect, but which, when well studied, are found to contain the philosophical principle of the Bhagavad-Gita. Crish-

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\* Schlegel, p. 148. "Devotus ad extinctionem in numine pervenit."

† Ibid., p. 149. "Devotus . . . in regione pura agens sibi sedem stabilem . . . ibi animo in unum intento, coarctatis cogitationibus, sensibus actibusque . . . equabiliter corpus, caput cervicemque sustinens, firmus, intuens nasal sui apicem . . ."



me, in order to say all that he is, is indeed obliged to be lengthy, for he is every thing. Nevertheless it is necessary that he should select, and I shall myself select.

"I am author of the creation and the dissolution of the universe.\* There is nothing greater than I am, O Ardjouna, and every thing depends upon me, as the pearls upon the string which holds them. I am the vapor in water, the light in the sun and in the moon, the invocation in the Vedas, the sound in the air, the masculine energy in man, the sweet perfume in the earth, the brightness in the flame, the life in animals, the fervor of zeal, the eternal seed of all nature; I am the wisdom of the sage, the power of the powerful, the glory of him who has glory . . . In animated beings I am chaste love† . . ."

"I am the father‡ of the world, I am of it the mother, the grand-parent, and the director; I am the secret doctrine, the expiation, the holy monosyllable, the three books of the Vedas; I am guide, nourisher, master, witness, abode, shelter, friend; . . . I am the source of heat and the source of rain; I have in my hand ambrosia and death; I am being and nonentity."

"I§ am the beginning, the middle, the end of all things. Among gods, I am the Vishnou, and the sun among the stars . . . Among the sacred books, I am the Book of Canticles . . . In the body I am soul, and in the soul intelligence . . . I am Merou among the mountains; among the priests I am their chief; among warriors I am Skanda, and among the seas the ocean . . . I am the monosyllable among words; among adorations, I am silent adoration; and among immobile things, the mountain Himalaya. Of all trees, I am the sacred fig . . .; Kapila among the sages . . . (there follows an enumeration which it is sufficient to indicate: among horses . . .; among elephants . . .; among rocks . . .; among serpents . . .; among fishes . . .; among

\* I have reviewed and corrected the French translation of Parrand according to the Latin translation of William Schlegel, p. 153.

† According to Wilkins and M. de Chery (*ibid.*), not according to Schlegel.

‡ Schlegel, p. 159.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

birds . . .); and among rivers, I am the Ganges . . . Of all sciences, I am that which teaches to rule the spirit, and in the orator I am eloquence. Among letters I am A, and among words composed I am the tie. I am time eternal; I am the preserver whose face is turned to every side; I am death which swallows up all; I am the germ of those who do not yet exist. Among things feminine, I am fortune, renown, eloquence, memory, prudence, valor, patience; among hymns, I am the great hymn, and among harmonious measures I am the first.\* Among the months, I am the month during which is shown the constellation of the head of the antelope, and among the seasons, the spring; in amusements, I am sport; among illustrious things, I am glory, I am victory, I am industry, I am power. In the race of the Vrishnidas, I am Vasudeva, and among the Pandous, the brave Ardjouna (his own interlocutor); among anchorites, Vyasa, and among the poets, Usanasa. Among conductors I am the goad; in the ambitious, prudence; in the secret, silence; in the learned, science. Whatever may be the nature of a thing, I am that nature, and there is nothing animate or inanimate that exists without me. My divine virtues are inexhaustible, and what I have just said to you can only give you a feeble idea of them. There is nothing beautiful, fortunate, and good, which is not a part of my glory. Finally, what is the need, O Ardjouna, of accumulating so many proofs of my power? A single atom emanating from me has produced the universe, and I am still myself entire."†

"I can be seen as you have just seen me by aid of the Vedas, by mortifications, by sacrifices, by alms."‡

"Put thy confidence in me alone; be humble in spirit, and renounce the fruit of actions. Science is superior to practice, and contemplation is superior to science."§

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\* Text obscure.

† This phrase is from M. de Chezy (ibid.). Parraud, after Wilkins: "I have made this universe with a portion of myself, and it exists still." Schlegel: "Stabilito ego hoc universo singula mei portione requevi."

‡ Schlegel, p. 169.

§ Ibid., p. 170.

" . . . That one among my servants is especially dear to me, whose heart is the friend of all nature . . . whom men fear not, who fears not men. I love him, again, who is without hope, and who has renounced all human enterprise. He is equally worthy of my love, who is neither rejoiced nor afflicted by any thing, who does not desire any thing, who is contented with every thing, who, because he is my servant, is little disquieted with good and bad fortune. Finally, he is my well-beloved servant, who is the same towards his enemy and his friend, in glory and in opprobrium, in heat and in cold, in pain and in pleasure ; who is careless of all the events of life, for whom praise and blame are indifferent, who speaks little, who is satisfied with every thing that happens, who has no habitation for himself, and who serves me with an unconquerable love."

Such is the Bhagavad-Gita, a monument of the greatest price, and which contains all the Indian mysticism. But no, it does not contain it all, for it does not contain all its extravagances. You do not know them all yet. There is one consequence of mysticism of which the Bhagavad-Gita does not speak, and at which the Sankhya of Patandjali has incontestably arrived, I mean the superior powers which fill up the third book of the Yoga-Soutras. Devotion, Yoguism, consists, we have seen, in preferring contemplation to science, inaction to action, faith to works, in trusting in predestination, in searching in all things for God alone, and at the same time in seeing God in all things, in the least as well as the greatest, in matter as well as in spirit, finally, in tending to the most intimate union with God through ecstasy. The recompense of this new science which ecstatic contemplation gives, is exemption from all the ordinary conditions of existence, is the elevation of humanity to the highest degree in the scale of being, is a superior power. "This power," says Colebrook, to whom I here return, "consists in being able to take all forms, a form so small, so subtle, that we might traverse all other bodies ; or in being able to take a gigantic stature, elevating ourselves as far as to the disk of the sun, touching the moon with the end of the

finger, plunging and seeing into the interior of the earth and into the midst of the sea. It consists in changing the course of nature, and in acting upon inanimate things as well as upon animate things." This power is magic. Magic is, doubtless, a natural product of the Indian imagination, and is found in many other religious and philosophical sects of India; but it is dominant in the Sankhya of Patandjali, it belongs to Yoguism; it is the reason why, in all the dramas, in all the popular stories in which sorcerers are found, all the sorcerers are Yoguists.

Such has been the Hindoo mysticism. It closes all the philosophical systems of India, it completes the circle of this great philosophical movement, which comprises the different points of view of human intelligence. I have stopped some time on the Indian philosophy, because it was, I believe, unknown to you, and because it was of the highest importance to recognize well what have been, in their first appearance at the foot of the Himalaya and upon the banks of the Ganges, the four systems whose last and richest development, in the eighteenth century, at London and at Paris, we ought to study in detail.

## LECTURE VII.

## GREEK PHILOSOPHY, ITS BEGINNINGS AND ITS MATURITY.

Philosophy in Greece.—Beginning of sensualism and of idealism in the Ionian school and in the Pythagorean school, in the school of Elis and in the atomic school.—Beginnings of skepticism in the Sophists.—Renewal and constitution of the Greek philosophy.—Socrates.—Cynicism, Cyrenaicism, Megarism.—Idealism of Plato.—Sensualism of Aristotle.

I HAVE exhibited to you sensualism, idealism, skepticism, and mysticism in India, at their first appearance in history. I propose now to show them to you at their second appearance, that is, in Greece. Here we have a great advantage: Greece has a certain chronology, and its philosophical systems succeed each other in an order quite as rigorously determinate as the other phenomena of Greek civilization. If then, for want of positive dates, I have been obliged to attach less importance to the somewhat hypothetical order, in which I have presented to you the different Indian systems, than to these systems themselves, here, on the contrary, I shall call your attention especially to the order of the systems, because this order is perfectly fixed, and because it contains and may reveal to us the secret of the development of the human mind in philosophy.

However far you may go back into the history of Greece without plunging into fabulous periods, you find, either aboriginal or transported from elsewhere, a population united without doubt, but composed of different tribes; you here find one language, in its roots and general forms the same, but rich in several important dialects; in short, you here find a religion which presents great common characteristics, but which is divided into a multitude of local worships. These worships have ministers which a high veneration surrounds; but these ministers do not form a body, an organized priesthood. These worships, these ministers,

are established upon sacred traditions ; but these traditions are not deposited in a revealed book, which, being found everywhere, recalls the authority of sacred dogmas, to whomsoever should be tempted to avoid them. There were no Vedas in Greece, and this circumstance, which belongs to the character and entire destiny of the Greek civilization, was one of the most powerful reasons for the rapid development of the spirit of independent research. Also the epoch which, in Greece, should represent almost the reign of the Vedas in India, is very short ; scarcely is it perceived in history, and it promptly gives place to a second epoch, which, on account of its relations of resemblance and difference with the first, might be called the theological epoch, and represents in Greece the Mimansa school in India. At the commencement of this epoch is Orpheus, the *theologian*, ὁ θεόλογος. Orpheus is the founder of the mysteries. If a thick veil still conceals the mysteries from our eyes, at least we know very well these two things, the only ones which interest us : 1st, The foundations of the mysteries must have been ordinary religion, for the mysteries were instituted by priests, and first took place in the interior of the temples ; 2d, At the same time, it is impossible that in the mysteries any thing else should have been done than to repeat legends, for we reject the idea that a species of secret society should have been established, with seven conditions of admission, simply for the rehearsal of the same things that were each day publicly uttered. The mysteries then must have contained something besides ; either a more regular exposition, or an explanation of some sort, physical or moral, of the traditions and popular fables. The mysteries open in Greece the epoch of theology, and this insensibly prepares and introduces that of philosophy. Now it must be remarked that it is precisely at this time that Greek chronology becomes clear and settled, so that we know with perfect exactness the precise date of the birth of philosophy in Greece. It was born six hundred years before our era, a few years more or less ; and it was prolonged six hundred years after our era. It has then had twelve centuries of exist-

ence, twelve centuries of regular development, during which it has produced, with an admirable fecundity, an infinite number of different systems, the chronological relations of which, being clearly determined, permit us to embrace and to follow this vast movement in its beginnings, its progress, and its end.

A common character governs the commencements of Greek philosophy. Observe well this character, because it reveals to you that of all nascent philosophy. The philosophical systems which fill up the first two centuries of Greek philosophy, from the sixth hundredth until the four hundredth year before the Christian era, have so much in common as that in general they relate more to the world and to nature than to man and to society. Thought, in the first trial of its strength, instead of falling back upon itself, is drawn without; the first object which solicits it is this world which surrounds it, and from which it cannot yet distinguish itself. Greek philosophy, at its first appearance, was a philosophy of nature. In these narrow limits, there are two possible points of view. When we consider nature, we are struck by two things, either by phenomena in themselves or by their relations. Phenomena themselves fall under the senses, they are visible, tangible, etc.; we know them only on condition of having seen, touched, felt them. But the relations of sensible phenomena, you touch not, see not, feel not: you conceive them. Let the philosophy of nature be applied to the study of phenomena, and you behold it on the road of pure physics. On the contrary, let it neglect terms, and stop at their relations, and you behold it on the road of mathematical abstractions. Thus it may happen that in time, two schools that are both schools of natural philosophy, shall become, one a school particularly of sensualism and physical philosophers, and the other a school of idealism and of geometricians; I allude here to the Ionian school and the Pythagorean school.

I do not mean to deny that Thales,\* the founder of the Ionian

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\* Of Miletus, flourished about six hundred years before Jesus Christ.

school, had any mathematical and astronomical knowledge;\* but his principal study was physics. The phenomenon with which he explained all others was water; and it is still a matter of dispute whether he admitted a superior principle which had drawn all things from water.† But if there is little of mathematics, of astronomy, and of theism in Thales, there is much less in Anaximander, and there is none at all in Anaximenes and in Heraclitus. It seems, indeed, that Anaximander‡ did not go beyond nature, and that nature alone, taken in its infinite totality, appeared to him as God.§ Thales had wholly constituted it with the principle of water; Anaximenes,|| as well as Diogenes Apollonius at a later period, employed air, a principle somewhat more refined; and the last representative of the Ionian school, Heraclitus,¶ took a principle still more subtile, but yet material, fire. Now, fire animates and destroys all things; it is essentially movement; movement is variety; whence the theory that every thing changes, flows, is metamorphosed without cessation, and that the common character of all the phenomena of the world is a perpetual contradiction, *ἐναντιότης*, a war, but a constituted war; for it has its own laws, which are the laws themselves of this world, laws necessary, irresistible *ἐμπαμένη*.

In the Ionian school, the soul of man plays a very feeble part; you think indeed that it is not spiritual in a system where the first principle is not spiritual itself; it is at one time a modification of air, at another time a modification of fire: it is materialism in its infancy. Fatalism is evident in Heraclitus; and the whole

\* Herodotus, i. 74; Pliny Hist. Nat., xxxvi. 1.

† Aristotle says nothing of it, *Metaph.*, i. 8. Cicero alone attributes to Thales what must be attributed to Anaxagoras alone. *De nat. Deor.*, i. 10. *Q. Ac.*, ii. 37.

‡ Of Miletus, pupil of Thales, also somewhat of an astronomer; Diogenes, ii. 2; Cicero, *De Divinat.*, i. 50.

§ *Τὸ ἀέρον τὸ θεῖον*. *Arist. Phys.*, iii. 4.

|| Also of Miletus, pupil of Anaximander, flourished about 557 B. C. On Anaximenes and Diogenes Apollonius, see Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 1st, chap. 8.

¶ Of Ephesus, about 500 years B. C. See last note, and Plato in the *Cratylus*.



school is so occupied with the world that it scarcely elevates itself above it: it alone is the god of the Ionian school.

It is prolonged and developed in another school, which is in some sort its appendix, the school of Leucippus and of Democritus. Here are the atoms which produce the world; movement is their essential attribute; they enter into action by themselves, and form all bodies, in combining among themselves according to certain laws which are inherent in them.\* You see that it is a system quite as fatalistic as, and still more clearly materialistic than that of Heraclitus. The soul is a collection of round and igneous atoms, whence result movement and thought.† Behold the theory of human knowledge, according to this system. Bodies composed of atoms are continually in motion, and consequently in perpetual emission of some of their atoms. These emanations of exterior bodies are their images, εἰδωλα: it is the first time, I believe, that this word appears in the language of philosophy, where it plays so great a part. These images, in contact with the organs, produce sensation, αἰσθησις; and this sensation produces thought, νόησις. Thence, as you may well think, a morality whose only rule is prudence, and only aim, well-being by equality of humor, εὐεστρω.‡ Of God, not one word: for the Ionian school, in its second development as in its first, there is no other god than the world; pantheism belongs to this school. What, in fact, is pantheism?§ The conception of the whole, τὸ πᾶν, that is, of the world, as the only object of thought, as the only existence, as sufficient for itself and explained by itself, that is, as God. Every nascent philosophy is a philosophy of nature, and inclines to pantheism; but Ionian sensualism necessarily falls into it. It considers the world alone, seeks in it only a material principle, makes the soul air, or an igneous atom,

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\* Arist., *Of Generation and of Corruption*, i. 7, Phys., iv. 8.

† Ibid., *Of the Soul*, i. 2.

‡ Cicer., *de Frui.*, v. 8, 29.

§ On Pantheism, see particularly the 1st Vol. of this Series, Lect. 5, *Appendix*, note 3.

and denies or neglects all the rest; it ends in pantheism, that is, in atheism.

We shall see an entirely different assemblage of ideas go forth from a contrary point of departure. Almost contemporaneous with Thales and Anaximander, Pythagoras,\* instead of stopping at phenomena in themselves, considers only their relation: this relation is abstract; this relation is perceptible only by thought; thence a tendency contrary to the Ionian tendency, thence an entirely different school. The eminent character of the Italic school is that of being mathematic and astronomic, and at the same time idealistic; for mathematics are founded upon abstraction, and there is an intimate alliance between mathematics and idealism. Also the list of the Pythagoreans is precisely that of the great mathematicians and great astronomers in Greece: first Archytas and Philolaüs, later Hipparchus and Ptolemæus. The Pythagorean school is so far mathematical, that it has often been designated by the name of the Mathematical school. It occupied itself particularly with arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music, all studies which elevate the mind above the sphere of sensible objects. Thence the mathematical idealism that penetrates all the parts of the Pythagorean system.

The Ionian physics regarded the relations of phenomena as simple modifications of these phenomena; it founded the abstract upon the concrete: on the contrary the Italian physics neglect the phenomena themselves for their relations, which they express in a numerical relation upon which they found the phenomena themselves, founding thus the concrete upon the abstract. The phenomena of nature are for them only imitations of numbers.† These numbers are active principles, causes. The ten fundamental numbers contain the whole system of the world: hence the decadal astronomic system; and as the number ten has its root in unity, these ten great bodies turn around a centre which repre-

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\* Born at Samos, but established at Crotona, in Italy.

† *Μικροῖσι εἶναι τὰ ὅλα τῶν ἀριθμῶν*, Aristot., *Metaphys.*, i. iv. and v.

sents unity. The centre of the system of the world, according to appearance, the senses and the school of Ionia, is the earth; the centre of the system of the universe, according to reason and the Italian school, is the sun. Now, as the sun represents unity, and as unity, although the active principle, is immobile, the sun is immobile. The laws of the movement of the ten great bodies around the sun constitute the music of the spheres; the entire world is a whole, harmoniously arranged, *κόσμος*, and it has preserved this beautiful name. Behold, then, a system of physics entirely mathematical.\* Pythagorean psychology has the same character. What is the soul, according to the Pythagoreans? A number which moves itself.† But the soul, in so far as number, has for its root unity, that is, God: God, in so far as unity, is perfection; and imperfection consists in departing from unity: perfecting consists then in going without cessation from imperfection to the type of perfection, that is, from variety to unity. The good is then unity, the bad is diversity; the return to the good, is the return, *ἀνοδος*, to unity; and consequently the law, the rule of all morality, is the resemblance of man to God, *ὁμολογία πρὸς τὸ θεῖον*, that is, the return of the number to its root, to unity, and virtue is a harmony.‡ Hence also the Pythagorean system of politics. It is founded on a relation, that of equality; and justice is a square number, *δριθμὸς ἰσάκις ἴσος*.§ It is, if you please, the glory of this school to have introduced morality into politics; but it is its evil to have wished to reduce politics to morality, and, by that, to make of the city a species of convent. The reputation of their politics, for here every positive monument fails us, is that of having inclined strongly towards aristocracy. This aristocracy was entirely moral, I believe; but

\* See for all this the excellent dissertation of Boeckh, *de vera endole Astronomiae Philolaicae*, Heidelb., 1810; and his writing entitled *Philolaos*, Berlin, 1819.

† Aristot., *Of the Soul*, 1, 2, *δριθμὸν εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν, κινεῖν δὲ ἑαυτὴν*.

‡ Ibid., *Mor. to Nicom.*, i. 6. Diog., viii. 83.

§ Aristot., *Mor. to Nicom.*, i. 1.

it was in fact an aristocracy, and so much the more dreadful as it weighed upon human creatures with all the weight of the sacred idea of virtue.

Behold a constituted idealistic school. But you have not arrived at the last development of this school; we arrive at it only with the school of Elis. What the atomic school is to the Ionian school, the school of Elis is to the Pythagorean school; it is the last consequence of it. Pythagoras had designated the harmony which reigns in the world, and manifests in it the unity of its eternal principle. Xenophanes, struck with this idea of the harmony of the world, begins already to make more account of unity than of variety as an element of the composition of things, and he keeps badly enough the balance between the unity of the Pythagoreans and the variety which Heraclites and the Ionians had alone considered. Soon Parmenides, who succeeds Xenophanes, is so much preoccupied, according to the example of his master, with unity, that perhaps without denying variety, he neglects it entirely. Zeno goes farther: he does not neglect variety, he denies it; consequently he denies movement, consequently the existence of the world;\* and then you have opposed to each other two schools, both of which, placed upon the exclusive foundation, one of the evidence of the senses, the other of rational abstraction, recognizing unity alone without variety, or variety without unity, end in the negation of matter and of the world, or in that of free thought and of God, in an insufficient pantheism or in a chimerical theism.

The school of Elis, with its subtle dialectics, easily confounds Ionian empiricism, and drives it to contradiction and to absurdity, in proving to it that, whether in the exterior world, or in consciousness, variety is possible and is conceivable only on condition of unity. At the same time the good sense of Ionian empiricism easily does justice to the Eleatic unity, which, existing alone, with-

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\* For the whole school of Elis, see in the *Fragments Philosophiques, Philosophie ancienne*, the two pieces on Xenophanes and Zeno of Elis.

out any dualism, and consequently without thought, for all thought supposes at least the duality of the subject and of the object, excludes all thought, all conception, even of itself, and is reduced even to an absolute existence, similar to the negation of existence. Hence the great discredit of the two schools. Some superior minds in the two parties, as Empedocles and Anaxagoras, arriving in the midst of this struggle, strive in vain to terminate it by borrowing something from both systems. The Ionian Anaxagoras\* adds to the Ionian philosophy the Pythagorean idea of a spirit independent of the world, which draws from its own essence the principle of its spontaneous activity, Νεὺς αὐτοκίνητος, and which, in its relation with the world, is there the first cause of movement, ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως.† Empedocles,‡ on the contrary, a disciple of the Pythagorean school, adds to it some Ionian elements, and the taste for physical researches. He preserves the two worlds of Parmenides, the intelligible world and the sensible world.§ In the theory of the soul he approaches the Ionians; with him the soul is a compound of elements,|| whilst in the Pythagorean school it was a number. In short, like Heraclitus, he considers fire as the principle agent of nature.¶

But instead of trying these laborious combinations, it was more natural to conclude from this strife, which lasted nearly a century, that there is nothing certain in either system, and that in general there can be nothing certain in them. If sensibility is the measure of all things, as is said in the Ionian school, it

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\* Of Clazomena, master and friend of Pericles, about 456.

† Arist., *Metaphys.*, i. 3. Let us cite the beautiful passage of Aristotle on Anaxagoras: "When a man said, that there was in nature as in animals an intelligence which is the cause of the arrangement and of the order of the universe, that man alone appeared to have preserved his reason in the midst of the follies of his predecessors." Plato, before Aristotle, said the same thing of Anaxagoras in the *Phædon*.

‡ Of Agrigentum, near 460.

§ *Fragm. Emped.*, Ed. Am. Peyron, p. 27.

|| Arist., *Of the Soul*, i. 2.

¶ Arist., *Metaphys.*, i. 3.

follows that nothing is certain, since to the senses every thing is variable, every thing is in a flow, in a perpetual metamorphosis, and that, according to the circumstances or the condition of the sensibility, what appeared true yesterday, appears false to-day, for the same reason and by the same authority. And if, according to the school of Elis, we admit unity alone without any variety, it is clear that every thing is in every thing, that every thing is alike, and that we may say of the same thing that it is at once true and false: and it is the same with good and with evil, and with every thing. You see that I allude to the Sophists. A frivolous, but universal skepticism was the basis of their teachings, and it must be observed that the Sophists came equally from all schools. Gorgias was from Leontium in Sicily, and a disciple of Empedocles, the Pythagorean; Prodicus of Ceos and Euthydemus of Chios had both studied in Greece. Protagoras of Abdera was a disciple of Democritus, and Diogoras of Melos was, as is said, his freedman. The result of this skeptical movement\* was to excite a taste for instruction, to awaken a sentiment of criticism, to guard against the follies of either dogmatism, and to render necessary new investigations, better directed and more profound.

But all this is but the infancy of philosophy in Greece; they are happy and bold preludes, but they are only preludes. They honor Greek genius, but they betray its inexperience. They could suffice small colonies; but when the Asiatic invasion had caused the colonies to flow back upon the Greek continent, when the Sophists, spreading themselves over all its surface, had carried everywhere the knowledge of the Ionian and Italic systems, and when in making them known they had attacked and decried them, then was formed, four centuries before the Christian era, in the bosom of Greece properly so called, in Athens, which was

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\* For the Sophists, see the dialogues of Plato, Aristotle, Sextus, and the learned work of M. Geel, *Historia Critica Sophistarum*. Traject. ad Rhen., 1823.

then, as it were, the capital, a new philosophic spirit which, leaning at first upon anterior systems, soon surpassed them, and began a new movement far more firm and regular than the preceding, and which is eminently Greek philosophy.

Greek philosophy was at first a philosophy of nature; arrived at its maturity, it changes character and direction and becomes,—it is a progress to which I now call your attention,—a moral, social, human philosophy. This does not mean that it has man alone for its object; far from that, it tends, as it always must, to the knowledge of the universal system of things, but it tends to it in starting from a fixed point, the knowledge of human nature. It was Socrates who opened this new era, and who represented its character in his own person. Socrates, as has been said, made philosophy descend from heaven to earth, in the sense that he wrested it from the physical and astronomical, the materialistic and the idealistic hypotheses of the Italian and Ionian schools, and brought it back to the study of human thought, not as the limit, but as the starting point of all healthy philosophy. The *Ἐνὶ δὲ σαυρὸν*, which had been until then only a wise precept, became a philosophical method. It is enough for the glory of Socrates to have put in the world a method, and to have made some happy applications of it to morality and to the theodicea.

Behold then, in modern terms, psychology laid down as the basis of all legitimate metaphysics. It seems, at the first glance, that a direction so wise tends to preserve the human mind from the illusions of exclusive systems, and that at least it will be necessary to wait some time in order to find again idealistic or sensualistic follies. No: under the very eyes of Socrates, two systems arise, which boast of coming from him, and which in fact do come from him, and of which one already falls into an ultra rigorousness and the other into an excessive looseness. I speak of the moral philosophy of Antisthenes or of Cynicism, and of that of Aristippus\* or of Cyrenaism. In short, as if in derision

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\* Both flourished about 380.

of Socratic wisdom, Euclid\* of Megara borrows from the dialectics of Socrates, mingled with the Eleatic traditions, the foundations of an Eristic school, which soon degenerates into a school of skepticism.

But let us leave here this insignificant commencement of the Socratic philosophy. It is in Plato and in Aristotle that its great and true development must be sought. What character has it taken in the hands of these two great men? In what results have the wisely directed researches of the two finest geniuses of the greatest century of Greek philosophy ended?

I begin by protesting against the character, exclusive in a contrary sense, which the friends and enemies of Plato and Aristotle have imputed to their philosophy in order to elevate it, or to abase it. These two excellent geniuses knew how to raise the two great systems of dogmatic philosophy to their highest power, and at the same time to keep them within the limits of sobriety and Socratic temperance. Neither Plato nor Aristotle fall into the extravagances of idealism and sensualism; but it must be allowed that they might conduct thither those who should follow upon their steps with a judgment less correct and less sure.

Plato† is the pupil of Socrates; he is penetrated with his method; he begins by psychology. In applying reflection to consciousness, he encounters in it very different phenomena, some of which are there only on condition of certain others, which are as it were the immutable bases of all knowledge; namely, those notions of unity, of substance, etc., which I have already so often enumerated to you, and which have for their character necessity and generality. Plato does not deny the particular, fickle, and changeable notions which enter into human knowledge, and serve it as accidental material, but he distinguishes from them the general notions without which there is no knowledge; he ab-

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\* Flourished about 400.

† Born 480 B. C.



abstracts them from others, and attaches himself to them as to the true object of the meditations of the philosopher. Moreover, all sound dialectics are founded upon definition. Now, the definition of the most particular object can be given only on one condition, the supposition of a general idea, to which you refer the object to be defined, and which gives to it its generic name. Thus you think only by the aid of general notions; you define only by the aid of general notions: general notions are the elements of your judgments and your definitions. But these notions are not explicable by particular notions, since these would be inconceivable without those. They come not then from the senses, which are the source of the particular and of the variable; they belong to the mind itself, to the reason, of which they are the proper objects. But, while the reason conceives them, it acknowledges that it does not constitute them; it acknowledges, for example, that it does not constitute the good and the beautiful, of which it has the notion, *ἰδέος*. It cannot even change the notion which it has of it; it can analyze it, but can neither destroy nor produce it. Behold then the general notions which, on one hand, are in the human reason as its objects, and which, on the other, considered in themselves, are essentially independent of the reason even which conceives them. Taken under the point of view of their independence, general notions, *ἰδέη*, are called *ἰδέη αὐτὰ καὶ αὐτά*,\* that is, ideas in themselves. And it must not be believed, as has been said, that Plato then gives them a substantial existence; when they are not objects of pure conception for human reason, they are attributes to divine reason: it is there that they substantially† exist. What the human reason is relatively to the divine reason, which is its principle, the *ἰδέη*, pure conceptions of

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\* See, in the *Fragmente Philosophiques*, *Philosophy ancienne*, a note on the language of the theory of ideas, p. 144.

† Everywhere we have repelled the absurd opinion that Plato considered ideas as beings subsisting of themselves; see 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 7 and 8, *Dieu principe des vérités nécessaires*, p. 85, and Vol. 4, Lecture 21, p. 461.

the human reason, are to the εἶδη αὐτὰ, καθ' αὐτά, fixed attributes of the divine reason. As our reason is only a reflection of the divine reason, so our general notions are only reflections of *Ideas* taken in themselves; these are types of all things, παραδείγματα, eternal types like the God whom they manifest. But in appearing, whether in the reason of man as general notions, or in nature as laws or general forms, by their inevitable mingling with things or particular notions, they are no longer aught than copies of themselves, ὁμοιώματα. It is from these copies that it is necessary to set out in order to elevate ourselves to their supreme models, and to their substance, God. It is that which Plato unceasingly recommends. There is something divine in the world and in the soul, to wit, the general element of all things, τὸ καθόλου, τὸ ἐν mingled with the infinite variety of particular and sensible phenomena τὰ πολλά, τὸ ἄπειρον. Instead of losing ourselves in the study of this insignificant diversity, it is necessary to search out its general laws, and from these laws to ascend to the eternal legislator. Instead of stopping at the relations of general ideas with the sensible notions which are mingled with them, we should set out from these general ideas to elevate ourselves to their incorruptible models. Now we can do this only by separating general ideas from the sensible and the variable, and by fastening ourselves upon them as to that which veritably exists, τὸ ὄντως ὄν, whilst the particular is only a phenomenon, a mere appearance, μὴ ὄν. Abstraction is, therefore, the process, the instrument of all good philosophy: this is also the process which characterizes the genius of Plato. Hence all that is true and sublime, and I was going to say also all that is somewhat chimerical in the Platonic philosophy; hence his æsthetics, hence his morality, hence his politics, and at first his decided taste for mathematics.

Plato, it is said, wrote on the door of his school: Let no one enter here who is not a geometrician. You conceive, in fact, that the mathematical habit of considering in quantities and dimensions only their essential properties, was a happy prepara-

tion to Platonic abstraction. He himself was an eminent geometer,\* an excellent astronomer.† Near the end of his life he adopted the Pythagorean system, which makes the earth revolve around the sun, and places the sun immovable in the centre of the universe. His constant object is to relate the particular to the general, the apparent to the real, the sensible, changeable, and movable world to that of ideas, where eternal truth is found. Thus in *Æsthetics*, in a beautiful object, he separates strictly the material of beauty which is apparent, visible, tangible, in fine sensible, from beauty itself, which does not fall under our senses,‡ which is not an image, but an idea; and it is to this ideal beauty, αὐτὸ τὸ κάλον, that he relates love, true love, that of the soul, abandoning the matter itself of beauty, its external phenomenon, its visible object, to the corresponding phenomenon of sensible love. Such is the theory of ideal beauty and of Platonic love. In morals, the law of action is the conformity of action with reason, provided with the idea of good.§ But this idea of good, to which our acts should be related, is itself related to absolute good, to God. The God of Plato is not an idea; he is a real|| being, endowed with intelligence, with movement, and with life.¶ He is beauty without mixture; \*\* he went out from himself to produce man and the world only by the effusion of his goodness.†† Accordingly, at the summit of Platonic morality, this first maxim which is given by the analysis of consciousness: The law of all

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\* He is the author of *Geometrical Analysis*, and to him or to his immediate disciples must be referred Conic Sections and Geometrical Loci. See Montucla, *Histoire des Mathématiques*, Vol. 1, p. 164.

† Delambre, *Histoire de l'Astronomie ancienne*, Vol. 1, p. 17, "Plato deserves to be considered one of the first promoters of true astronomical science."

‡ See *Hippias*, *Phædrus*, *the Banquet*.

§ *Republic*.

| On the nature of the God of Plato, see 1st Series, Vol. 2, *Lectures 9 and 10, du Mysticisme*, p. 110.

¶ *The Sophist*.

\*\* *The Banquet*.

†† *Timæus* and the notes of our translation, Vol. 12, p. 341.

action is the relation of this action to reason, is succeeded by this very differently general maxim : The moral law is the relation of man to God ; virtue is the effort of humanity to attain to resemblance with its author, *ἡμολώσις θεῷ*.\* As the æsthetics of Plato are entirely metaphysical and his morality entirely religious, so his politics are entirely moral. He scolds Themistocles and Pericles for being occupied with the exterior prosperity of the State, instead of thinking, above all things, of its moral strength, and the virtue of the citizens.†

Finally, if you consider in Plato his historical views, you will find that he is full of veneration for the past. In politics, although liberal and the declared enemy of despotism and of tyranny, he is more inclined towards Sparta than towards Athens, and he has before him the legislation of Minos and Lycurgus, and if he imitates‡ that of Solon, it is to render it more severe. In philosophy he is without pity towards Democritus and Protagoras ;§ he combats, it is true, the school of Elis and its immovable unity, but he professes for the Pythagorean school the highest admiration ; and, more than once, he complacently reproduces its principles and even its language. His system of the world is entirely Pythagorean. His theory of ideas is almost the theory of numbers of Pythagoras : doubtless it surpasses it infinitely ; for if numbers are more intellectual than elements, ideas are still more so than numbers ; they substitute in the mind of man logic for arithmetic, and in God spiritual and moral attributes for geometrical powers.¶ It surpasses the theory of Pythagoras, I say, but it proceeds from it ; it is a considerable progress, but it is a manifest imitation. Independent as a pupil of Socrates, you will

\* *Theætetus* and *Timæus*.

† *Gorgias*.

‡ The *Laus*, argument and notes.

§ *Protagoras*, *Theætetus*, etc.

¶ See in the *Fragments*, *Philosophie ancienne*, the *Antécédents du Phédre*, p. 160 ; and in general, for the relation and differences of Plato and Pythagoras, besides this piece, that entitled : *Examen d'un Passage Pythagoricien du Minon*.

always see Plato making free use of religious traditions, but you will always see him placing carefully his philosophy in relation with these traditions.\* As to the form of his works, doubtless it is not the poesy of the Pythagoreans and of the Elians; he writes in prose, but he writes dialogues, and his prose is imbued with a poetic spirit. The style of Plato is very simple; but in this simplicity the sublime, tempered by grace, prevails. In recapitulation, the constant process of Plato is abstraction, and abstraction gives him an ideal tendency. Ideal is a word which Plato gave the world; and the name has remained attached to his manner as well as to his system. This system is an avowed idealism. The glory of Plato, I repeat it, is to have elevated it so high, and to have held it some time on the point whence all idealism falls into extravagance.

An equal glory of another kind is not wanting to Aristotle. Plato makes use of psychological and logical analysis in order to draw from the depths of human knowledge an element which does not proceed from the senses. This element being found, he makes use of it as a starting point and a resting place in order to pass beyond the visible world: general ideas in the mind, *τὰ σίδη*, conduct him to absolute ideas, *τὰ σίδη αὐτὰ καὶ αὐτά*, and these to God, their proper subject. On the contrary, Aristotle, acknowledging with Plato that there are in the mind ideas which cannot be explained by sensible experience, instead of setting out from these ideas to elevate himself to their invisible source, seeks to follow them into reality. The one seems to aspire to go out from the world, the other to plunge into it; Aristotle recognizes the world as the work of a God, but he shuts himself up in it, and studies it under all its forms and in all its great phenomena; he studies nature as humanity, the mind as matter, the arts as sciences. Thence follow metaphysics and natural history, logic and physics, poetry, rhetoric, and grammar, with morality and

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\* See *Phædon* and the argument, *Gorgias*, and the argument towards the end.

politics. Plato is the genius of abstraction, Aristotle that of classification. The first has more elevation, the second more extent.

It is not so true as some persons are pleased to say, that Aristotle draws all human knowledge from a single source, sensible experience.\* Aristotle carefully distinguishes three classes of truths: 1st, The truths that are obtained by demonstration, deduced truths; 2d, General truths which are the bases of all demonstration, and which come from reason itself; 3d, Particular truths which come from sensible experience. Like Plato, he sets out with the distinction of the particular and the universal. "Sensible experience," he says, "gives what is here, there, now, in such or such a manner; but it is impossible for it to give what is everywhere and at all times."† "First truths, principles, are not proved; they compel, at once, our assent, our faith; it is not necessary to seek out their foundations, they repose upon themselves."‡

Plato was especially occupied with dialectics. He excels in arguments against every particular view; his great object is to show the inconsistency of particular notions, and to lead to ideas as the basis of all certainty and all science: Plato is essentially refutative. Aristotle is less a dialectician than a logician. He does not refute, he demonstrates; or at least with him, refutation plays only a secondary part in demonstration, whilst with Plato, refutation is entirely demonstration. Accordingly the one proceeds

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\* I should now hesitate less to yield to the common opinion, and impute to Aristotle an empiricism more or less consistent. He himself, at the end of the *Last Analytics*, Book ii. Chap. xix., declares that the most general notions come from the comparison of particular notions, and these from sensation. See also *Treatise on the Soul*, iii. 8, in which Aristotle sustains that there is no thought without an image.

† *Last Analyt.*, i. 81. Αισθάνεσθαι ἀναγκαῖον τόδε τε καὶ τόδε καὶ νῦν τόδε καθόλου καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀδύνατον αἰσθάνεσθαι· οὐ γὰρ τόδε οὐδέ νῦν, οὐ γὰρ αἰεὶ ἢ καθόλου· τὸ γὰρ αἰεὶ καὶ πανταχόθεν—καθόλου φερέν εἶναι.

‡ *Topics*, i. 1. Ἐστὶ γὰρ ἀληθὴ μὲν καὶ πρῶτα, μὴ δὲ ἐτέρων, ἀλλὰ δι' ἑαυτῶν ἔχοντα τὴν πίστιν· οὐ οἷ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστημονικαῖς ἀρχαῖς ἐπιστρέφεται τὸ διὰ τί, ἀλλ' ἑαυτὴν τῶν ἀρχῶν αὐτὴν καθ' ἑαυτὴν εἶναι πιστήν.

by dialogue, so well adapted to refutation, and conceals his dogmatic aim; the other commences by establishing it, and marches openly to it, by regular dissertation and by the great road of demonstration. Plato makes more use of induction; Aristotle of deduction: he has accordingly perfected its instrument, in first giving the laws of the regular syllogism.

I add that Aristotle acknowledges a first cause in the universe, a cause which commences movement without falling into it;\* and this is not a physical cause, it is an intelligence,† an intelligence which recognizes itself.‡ The God of Aristotle is all-sufficient in himself;§ he is different from the world in that he does not recognize it, which is the extreme opposed to that of pantheism, and which is neither less absurd nor less dangerous.¶

I will not, however, affirm that Aristotle always held the balance so firm, between idealism and sensualism, that he has never inclined to one side more than to the other. A sensualistic tendency is often evident in him.

Observe that Aristotle is much less great as a mathematician and astronomer than as a natural philosopher, and above all as a naturalist. I need not remind you of the *History of Animals*, which is even now the admiration of modern science. Contrary to the Pythagorean and Platonic schools, and conformably to the

\* Phys., viii. 5. Τὸ πρῶτον κινεῖν δαίτηρον. See also Metaphysics, Book xii. Chap. vii.

† Ibid., ii. 5. Ἀνάγκη πρότερον Νοῦν εἶναι καὶ φέσιν εἶναι καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν καὶ ταῦτά τοις πάντες.

‡ Metaphysics, Book xii. Chap. ix. p. 214, of our translation: "God thinks himself, if he is what is most powerful, and his thought is the thought of thought."

§ Polit., vii. 1. Ἐνθαυμῶν ἑστὶ καὶ μακρότις δὲ ὁπόθεν δὲ τῶν ἐξωτερικῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλὰ δὲ αὐτὸν αὐτός.

¶ Aristotle, in the Metaphysics, Book xii. Chap. ix., declares that the first intelligence does not think, that is, recognizes only itself, and nothing else, and that to know any thing else would degrade it. "There are things," he says, "which it is better not to see than to see . . . It is evident that the first intelligence thinks of what is most excellent and most divine, and that it changes not objects, and change for it would be decay; it would be falling into movement."

Ionian school, he made the sun revolve around the earth.\* According to him movement is eternal as well as the world.†

In regard to the soul, he acknowledges with Plato that it is distinct from the body, but he declares at the same time that it is inseparable from it; it is only the primitive form of an animate body;‡ and in asserting the immortality of the intellectual principle, he only grants it immortality without memory.§

His æsthetics are half empiric; in them, art is only the imitation of nature. Hence the celebrated theory opposed to that of the beau-ideal of Platonism.||

In morals, Aristotle seems to draw the will from desire and appetite.¶ He does not take so bold a position as Plato against the passions; he wishes only to regulate them; but how does he regulate them? What is virtue according to him? Equilibrium among the passions,\*\* the golden mean, the *ne quid nimis*, none too much, proportion. But observe that if this moral philosophy is more active whilst that of Plato is more contemplative, it has the inconvenience of being arbitrary; for who will determine this just proportion that must be preserved in passion? What is the rule, the formula that shall prescribe the proper dose in which we must mingle wrath and sweetness, vivacity and indolence, in order to constitute virtue? The law of Aristotle is good; but it supposes another higher and more fixed.

On politics, Aristotle wrote two works, one of which is exactly

\* *Metaphysics*, Book xii. Chap. viii. Montucla, *Hist. of Mathem.*, Vol. i. p. 186.

† *Of the Heaven*, i. 12; *Metaphysics*, Book xii. Chap. vii. p. 190. "It is impossible that movement should be produced or should perish, for it is eternal . . ." (*Ibid.*), p. 198. "The world is eternal, whether in its state of periodic movement or in any other." P. 198. "There exists a being eternally moved by a continual movement."

‡ *Of the Soul*, Book ii. Chaps. i. and ii.

§ *Metaphysics*, xii. 8; *Of the Soul*, iii. 5; Tennemann affirms that he denies.

| See *Poetry and Rhetoric*.

¶ *Of the Soul*, iii. 9 and 10.

\*\* *Mor. Nic.*, ii. 6. Ἀετὴ (ἡ ἡθικὴ) γὰρ ἐστὶ κατὰ μέτρον καὶ ἀνάγκην, ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοῖς ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἐλλείψει καὶ τὸ μέτρον.



the type of that of Montesquieu. The same man who submitted to a strict analysis the different elements of the organization of animals, and those of human thought in all its great applications, this same man searched into the elements of all the governments known up to his own times, Greek and foreign; he described the forms of all these governments, and without inclining either to one or to the other, with the cool deliberation which characterizes him, he reduced them to their most general laws. It was a true *Esprit des Lois*. It has perished;\* but fortunately it passed in great part into the political work which remains to us of Aristotle. This work is one of the finest monuments of antiquity; it is profoundly historical, and it contains also a political theory properly so called. The maxim of the State is utility, according to Aristotle.† Here we are very far from the politics of Plato. The maxim of utility has its truth, without doubt, but it is not the whole truth; it may lead astray, and it has led Aristotle astray. The true maxim of the State is justice, now justice is always useful, and the reciprocal is generally true; but by deranging the terms, by placing utility for a maxim instead of justice, the smallest error in regard to utility, which is so difficult to be calculated, precipitates us into innumerable injustices. Thus Aristotle encounters on his way the great political question of antiquity, that of slavery; and applying badly the maxim of utility, he resolves in favor of slavery: there will then be some men destined to slavery, others to liberty and to tyranny; some must command, others obey, and this for their greatest advantage: Aristotle says so expressly.‡ Nay, more, he sometimes goes so far as to uphold tyranny, and always when for the general interest. Doubtless there are cases in which it is necessary to place the laws temporarily in the hands of a man of genius; but ac-

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\* Diog., v. 5. See the collection given by Neumann, of the fragments which subsist. Heidelb., 1827.

† Book i., the first lines.

‡ Polit., i. 8, 5, 6. Καὶ ὅτι εἰσὶν οἱ μὲν φύσει δοῦλοι, οἱ δὲ ἐλευθεροί . . . ὅν τινα φέρει τὸ μὲν δουλεύειν, τὸ δὲ δεσποτίζειν.

according to Aristotle, there are mortals who are kings by natural right.\* His natural king so strongly resembles Alexander, that it is not impossible that the master may have here thought of his heroic pupil.†

Finally, in his historical views, Aristotle never boasts of the past. He makes no use of mythological forms, never makes an appeal, never a favorable allusion to religions and to mythology.‡ His independence resembles contempt or absolute indifference. It must not be forgotten that he almost created didactic prose; for as much as the ideal predominates in the style of Plato, so much rigor predominates in that of Aristotle. But as Plato may, in some places, be reproached a little with poetic luxury, so may Aristotle be reproached with extreme dryness. If one abuses abstraction and generalization, the other abuses analysis, by that talent of infinite decomposition which, exercising itself at the same time on ideas and their signs (for Aristotle saw very well their influence),§ ended sometimes in an excessive subtilty and methodically reduced every thing to an imperceptible powder, whilst Plato, although wandering in the skies, is continually surrounded by brilliant clouds.

Such are, summarily but faithfully represented, the two great geniuses, or rather the two great systems produced by Greek philosophy in its palmiest days, in its days of vigor, maturity, and wisdom; and these two systems contain already, as we have seen, sensualism and idealism in reasonable limits. The next lecture will follow them in their development.

\* Polit., iii. 3.

† I refer for a better judgment upon the politics of Aristotle to the argument of the *Laws*, Vol. 7 of our translation of Platon.

‡ Simplic. ad Aristot. Categor., Cap. i. p. 2. Οὐ μὲν οὐδὲ μέθοις, οὐδὲ συλλογικοῖς αἰνίγμασιν, ὥς τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ τινῶν, Ἀριστοτέλης ἐχρήσατο.

§ See his treatise on *Language*. περί Ἑρμηνείας.

## LECTURE VIII.

## GREEK PHILOSOPHY. ITS DEVELOPMENTS, AND ITS END.

The Platonic school and the peripatetic school incline more and more to idealism and sensualism.—Epicureanism and stoicism much more still.—Struggle between the two systems. Skepticism.—First school of skepticism the product of idealism: new Academy.—Second school of skepticism the product of sensualism: Ænesidemus and Sextus.—Return of the want of knowing and believing: Mysticism.—School of Alexandria. Its Theodicea. Its psychology.—Ecstasy.—Theurgy.—End of Greek philosophy.

You have seen Plato and Aristotle, almost at their departure from the hands of Socrates, and while yet penetrated with his philosophy, divide the Greek philosophy into two great systems which, although kept within proper limits by the genius and good sense of these two great men, nevertheless incline towards idealism and towards sensualism, and are related the one rather to the Ionian, and the other rather to the Pythagorean school. An analysis, rapid without doubt, but exact, must have convinced you of it; but if this analysis is not sufficient for you, you may consult a dialectician more sure than myself, time, history, which can, from the principles confided to it, infallibly draw the consequences that they conceal, and which illumines these principles by the light of their consequences. I have told you that the system of Aristotle was rather related to Ionian sensualism, and the system of Plato to Pythagorean idealism. Let us interrogate facts and history. What has the Platonic school done with the principles of Plato? What has the peripatetic school done with the principles of Aristotle?

After the death of Plato, five men\* sustain, in the Academy, the Platonic philosophy, with talent and with fidelity. It is im-

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\* Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemon, Crates, and Crantor.

portant here to establish this fidelity.\* Well! what character has Platonism taken in the hands of these disciples so faithful to their master, and especially in the hands of the most illustrious disciple, Xenocrates? I read in Aristotle† that Xenocrates defines the soul as number which moves itself. This is a Pythagorean maxim. It may be seen by a passage from Stobæus‡ that Xenocrates brought back in philosophy the language of the astronomical theology of the Pythagoreans. It appears that he had also singularly exaggerated the Platonic psychology; for Cicero declares that Xenocrates separated the soul from the body in such a manner that it was difficult to say what he had done with it.§ Finally, in morals, this same Cicero informs|| us that Xenocrates exaggerated virtue and underrated every thing else. You see, then, the Academy became almost openly idealistic and Pythagorean. Let us see what, on his side, became of the school of Aristotle.

At the first glance which I cast upon the list of the Platonists and of the peripatetics,¶ I am struck at finding, above all, moralists among the Platonists, and natural philosophers among the

\* Cicero, *Quæst. Academ.*, i. 9. "Speusippus et Xenocrates, qui primi Platonis rationem auctoritatemque susceperunt, et post hos Polemon et Crates unaque Crantor in Academia congregati diligenter ea quæ a superioribus acceperant, tuebantur."

† Arist., *Of the Soul*, i. 2: *Ξενοκράτης τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν οὐσίαν ἀριθμὸν αὐτὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ κινούμενον ἀποφηνάμενος*. Cicero says almost the same thing, *Tusc.*, i. 10.

‡ Stobæus, *Eclog. Phys.*, p. 62: *Ξενοκράτης... τὴν μονάδα καὶ τὴν δυάδα θεός, τὴν μὲν ὡς ἄρρενα πατὴρ ἔχουσιν τάξιν, ἐν οὐρανῷ βασιλεύουσιν, ἡντινα προσαγορεύει καὶ Ζήνα καὶ περιττὸν καὶ νοῦν, ὅστις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πρῶτος θεός, τὴν δὲ ὡς θήλειαν, μητὴρ θεῶν δίκην τῆς ἐπὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν λήξεως ἔχουμένην, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ψυχὴ τοῦ παντός... θεῖον δὲ εἶναι καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας πυρώδεις δαυμπτοὺς θεοὺς καὶ ἐτέρους ὑποσιλῆονους δαίμονας ἀσάφους*.

§ Cicero, *Academ.*, i. 11. "Expertem... corporis animam."—*Academ.*, ii. 39. "Mentem quoque sine ullo corpore, quod intelligi quale sit vix potest."

|| *Tusc.*, v. 18. "Exaggerabat virtutem, extenuabat cætera et abjiciebat."

¶ That of the Platonists has already been seen; the following is that of the peripatetics: Theophrastus, Eudemus, Dicaearchus, Aristoxenus, Heraclidus, Strato, Demetrius Phalerius, Lycon, Hieronymus, Aristo, Critolaus, Diodorus Tyrus.

peripatetics. Thus Theophrastus has left a name in natural history, and Strato of Lampsacus was called *the Natural Philosopher*. Let us see, then, what these natural philosophers have made of peripateticism. Theophrastus, according to Cicero,\* attributes the character of divinity, sometimes to intelligence, which is the pure doctrine of Aristotle, but sometimes also to the heavens, and to all the astronomical systems. But, behold something more clear. Dicæarchus teaches† that there is no soul, that the soul is a word, *nomen inane*; that this power, by which we act and feel, is nothing else than life equally diffused throughout all bodies; that, what is called the soul is inseparable from the body, that it is only a body, a matter one and simple in its essence, but of which, the different elements are arranged and tempered among themselves so as to produce life and feeling. Aristoxenus the musician, also from the school of Aristotle, regards the soul‡ as a vibration of the body, as the result of different elements and movements of the body, and what in music is called harmony. That which Dicæarchus and Aristoxenus had done for the soul, Strato, the natural philosopher, did for God. According to him what is called God, intelligence and divine power,§ is nothing else than the power of nature deprived of all consciousness of itself; there is no need of the hypothesis of a God to ex-

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\* Cicero, de Nat. Deor., i. "Modo... menti divinum tribuit principatum, modo cælo, tunc autem et signis sideribusque cælestibus."

† Cicero, Tusc., Vol. i. 10. "Nihil esse omnino animum, et hoc esse nomen inane totum, frustra que animalia animantes appellari, neque in homine inesse animum et animam, nec in bestia, vimque omnem eam qua vel agamus vel sentiamus in omnibus corporibus vivis æquabiliter esse fusam, neque separabilem a corpore esse, quippe quæ nulla sit, nec alit quidquam nisi corpus unum et simplex ita figuratum ut temperatione naturæ vigeat et sentiat."

‡ Cicero, Tusc. i. 10. "Aristoxenus musicus idemque philosophus (animam) ipsius corporis intentionem quamdam velut in cantu et fidibus, quæ harmonia dicitur, sic ex corporis totius natura et figura varios motus cieri, tanquam in cantu sonos dicit..."

§ Cicero, de Natur. Deor., i. 18. "Strato, is qui physicus appellatur, omnem vim divinam in natura sitam esse censet, quæ causas gignendi, augendi et minuendi habeat, sed careat omni sensu ac figura."

plain the world;\* every thing goes on and is explained by the necessary connection of cause and effect, by the poise and counterpoise of nature. The world is a mere mechanism;† space is only the relation of distance of bodies among themselves;‡ time the relation of events.§ In metaphysics every thing is relative,|| and the true and the false are reduced to mere words. As to morality,¶ Strato was little occupied with it. Finally, in an unpublished commentary of Olympiodorus on the *Phædon*, in the library of the king,\*\* I find an argument of this same Olympiodorus in favor of the immortality of the soul, against Strato the natural philosopher. The few moralists which the list of the immediate successors of Aristotle embraces are only sensualistic rhetoricians.†† Behold to what the school of Aristotle arrived a century after his death.

Three centuries before the Christian era, the peripatetic and Platonic schools, debased and degenerated, are replaced by two other schools which inherit their importance, which continue

\* Cicero, *Academ.*, iv. 38. "Lampsacenus Strato negat opera deorum esse uti ad fabricandum mundum; quæcumque autem sunt docet omnia esse effecta naturæ, et quidquid aut sit aut fiat naturalibus fieri aut factum esse docet ponderibus et motibus."

† Plutar., *advers. Colot.* Strato, the Corypheus of the Lyceum, τὸν ἄλλαν περιπαρηκιδὸν κορυφαίδατος, combats Plato on movement, on intelligence, on the soul, and pretends that the world is a mere mechanism, ἐὶς ζῶον εἶναι φησὶ.

‡ Stobæus, *Eclog. Phys.*, p. 880. Τόνον δὲ εἶναι τὸ παράξυ δίδωρμα τοῦ περιπατητοῦ καὶ τοῦ περιπατητοῦ.

§ Τὸ ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς πύσσον. Simplic., *Physic. Arist.*, p. 187.

¶ Sext. *Empir.*, *advers. Mathem.*, vii. 13.

¶ Cic., *de Finib.*, v. 5. "Perpauca de moribus." It must be confessed, nevertheless, that there are in antiquity two passages which seem in opposition to the preceding: one is a passage from Simplicius on the *Physics* of Aristotle, p. 225; the other is a passage from Plutarch (*de Solertia Animal.*), in which Strato would have maintained that sensibility without the mind does not see, does not understand, etc., and that it is the mind that perceives, and not the senses.

\*\* See *Fragments philosophiques, Philosophie ancienne*, p. 515.

†† Cic., *Ibid.* Lycon: "Hujus discipulus, oratione locuples, rebus ipse junior."—Ariston: "Gravitas in eo non fuit."—Hieronym.: "Summum bonum vacuitatem doloris..."—Critolaus: "Summum bonum ponit perfectionem vitæ recte fluentis secundum naturam."

them in presenting them under other forms and which carry on in an under-ground manner the quarrel of peripateticism and Platonism. I speak now of Epicureanism and Stoicism. But here is presented a phenomenon which must be pointed out to you: here begins the dismemberment of Greek philosophy. At first the Ionic school and the Pythagorean school were particularly occupied with the exterior world, and philosophy was little else than a philosophy of nature. Socrates brings it back to the study of human nature; Aristotle and Plato in remaining faithful to the spirit of Socrates, in starting from human nature, arrive at a complete system which embraces with human nature, nature entire, God and the world. Aristotle and Plato gave to philosophy all its parts; they constituted it. But after them, with the debates of their schools, the systematic genius, discouraged, became enfeebled, quitted the heights, thus to speak, descended into the plain, and to the great questions of metaphysics, succeeded the interesting, but limited researches of moral philosophy. The common character of Stoicism and of Epicureanism, is to reduce philosophy almost entirely to morality. Let us follow them upon this narrow way; there, seemingly, it will be more easy to discern the principles and the consequences, the true character of both systems. Let us begin with Epicureanism.

Epicureanism proposes to lead man to his true end. Those things which may hide from man his true end, are his illusions, his prejudices, his errors, his ignorance. This ignorance is of two kinds. It is, first, ignorance of the laws of the exterior world wherein man passes his life; ignorance which may lead to absurd superstitions, and trouble the soul with the delirium of false fears and false hopes; hence the necessity of physics as a means of morality. The other ignorance which may mislead man as to his true end, is that of his own nature, of his faculties, of their power and of their limits. Before all else, an exact knowledge of human reason is necessary. Hence these prolegomena of Epicurean philosophy, called Canons, that is, collections of rules on human reason and on its employment.

Here behold the theory of human reason according to Epicurus. Bodies which compose the universe are themselves composed of atoms which are in a perpetual emission of some of their parts, *ἀπορροαί*. These atoms in contact with the senses, produce sensation, *αἴσθησις*. I give you the Greek words; for the history of philosophic language is not an unimportant part of the history of ideas. A sensation may be conceived either as regards its object or as regards him who experiences it. As regards him who experiences it, it is affective, agreeable or disagreeable; it produces sentiments, primitive passions, *τὰ πάθη*. To sensation is inseparably attached the knowledge of the object which excites it, and it is for this reason that Epicurus marked the intimate relation of these two phenomena, by giving them two analogous names. He called *ἐπαίσθησις*, the second phenomenon joined to the first. It is sensation as regards its object, representative sensation, the idea of sensation, the sensible idea of the moderns. Now, all sensation is always true in so far as sensation; it can be neither proved nor contradicted, *ἄλογος*; it is evident of itself, *ἐναργής*. It is from sensations, sensible ideas that we draw all our general ideas; and we draw them from them because sensations contain their germs, as by anticipation. Hence the *προλήψεις*, the anticipations of Epicurus, in regard to which there is still dispute. General ideas, *δόξαι*, result from them: these general ideas which belong to man himself, and which are the work of his reason, are alone subject to error. Error is not in the sensation nor in the idea of sensation, but in the generalizations which we draw from them. Provided that these general ideas are purely collective, and derived from sensible ideas; there are no necessary and absolute ideas; there are contingent and relative ideas only. Such are the canons of Epicurus, his theory of human reason.

His physical theory is the atomic. If we set aside differences of detail, we find that the physical theory of Epicurus is that of Democritus renewed in its principles, and necessarily so in its consequences.

If the world is but a compound of atoms which possess in



themselves movement and the laws of all possible combinations, the world is all-sufficient in itself and is explained by itself, there is no need of a first mover, nor of a first intelligence; thus there is no need of Providence. Epicurus admits not a God, but gods. And what are these gods? They are not pure spirits; for there is no spirit in the atomic theory: they are not bodies, for where are the bodies that we may call gods? In this embarrassment, Epicurus, compelled to acknowledge that the human race believe in the existence of gods, addresses himself to an old theory of Democritus; he appeals to dreams, to fancies. As in dreams there are images that act upon us and determine in us agreeable or painful sensations, without proceeding from exterior bodies, so the gods are images similar to those of our dreams, but greater,\* having the human form; images which are not precisely bodies and yet not deprived of materiality, which are whatever you please, but which in short must be admitted since the human race believes in gods, and since the universality of the religious sentiment is a fact which demands a cause; and it is found, not in a spiritual god which cannot exist, not in corporeal gods which no one has seen, but in phantoms which produce upon the human soul, such as it is, an impression analogous to those which we receive in dreams. Such are the very equivocal gods of Epicurus. And you think indeed that the soul, in such a system, is but a body, ἡ ψυχὴ σῶμα ἐστίν;† this is positive. And what is this body? A body necessarily composed of atoms. And of what atoms? Of the finest, of the most delicate, of round atoms, of fire, of air, of light. That was sufficient for Democritus, but it was not sufficient for Epicurus. And here is a progress to which I wish to call your attention. Epicurus in enumerating the atoms with which the soul may be explained, finds none but those which I have just named, but he confesses that these atoms cannot account for sensation. He

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\* *Μεγάλων εἰδώλων καὶ ἀνθρωποειδῶν*. Sext. Empir., advers. Math., ix. 26.

† *Diog. L.*, x. 63.

confesses that in order to explain sensation, another element is necessary, an element which is not fire, which is not air, which is not light, which, too, is not a mere spirit, for a mere spirit is an absurdity; which is nevertheless something, a nameless something.\* Is it that soul which we have found in the Sankhya of Kapila, and which Colebrook defined as a kind of compromise between a material and an immaterial soul? Or, is it the unknown something of some modern materialists, that unknown something, which, frankly proposed and well understood, would be sufficient for a discreet spiritualism which does not pretend to know the nature of the soul? I fear that it is nothing else than a material element, badly analyzed, and consequently still without a name in the physiology of Epicurus, as, for example, the animal spirits of the seventeenth century or the nervous fluid of the eighteenth. In this case, even, it would be a progress in ancient physics. From all this, it follows evidently that if the soul is material, it is mortal. It is a compound which is dissolved at death; the atoms are separated, and all is ended.

Let us see to what morality such a doctrine and such physics will lead. Let us take, at their starting-point, sensations in so far as agreeable or disagreeable, τὰ πᾶθη. If there are no other primitive moral phenomena than those, what rule shall be applied to agreeable or disagreeable sentiments, except the pursuit of one and the shunning of the other, αἵρεσις, φύγη? And at what shall we arrive by avoiding painful sensations and pursuing agreeable sensations? At pleasure, ἡδονή. But pleasures differ very much from each other; there are pleasures of the body and pleasures of the mind; pleasure in so far as it is pleasure is equal to itself; there is no pleasure which has, in itself, more value than another; but if all are equal in dignity, ἄξια, they are not equal in intensity, they are not equal in duration, they are not equal as to their consequences. And these

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\* Stob. Ecl. Phys., i. 789. Τόδε ἀκαταρμήσσον τὴν ἐν ἡμῖν ἔμψυχον αἰσθητικόν· ἐν οὐδενὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀπομαζόμενων στοιχείων εἶναι αἰσθητικόν.

different characters are far from always accompanying each other. This is the first distinction, which led Epicurus to a more general distinction, and in which the originality of his philosophy resides.

The most lively pleasure is that which supposes the greatest development of physical or moral activity; this is what Epicurus calls *ἡδονὴ ἐν κινήσει*, the pleasure of movement. Now the condition of this pleasure is that of being a mixture of pleasure and of pain. It is the happiness of passion, the enjoyment of which is uneasy and its fruits often bitter. Aristippus did not go farther than this happiness; but Epicurus saw that it was a secondary and accessory happiness which must be seized when encountered in the way, but always made subordinate to true happiness, which consists in the repose of the soul, *ἡδονὴ κατὰ στημασική*. Is there, in short, any possible happiness where this does not exist? When the soul is not in peace there is no happiness, pleasure alone exists. Eschew not pleasure, *ἐν κινήσει*, but take it on condition of not endangering the peace of the soul, *κατὰ στημασική*. To the allurements of pleasures, we must then oppose reason, which calculates not only their intensity, but their duration, their consequences. The application of reason to the passions is morality. Hence virtue, and supreme virtue, wisdom, *φρόνησις*. Without virtue, without wisdom, we have disquiet pleasures, fruitful in sad consequences; with wisdom, with virtue, we have fewer disquiet pleasures, but repose and happiness of soul. Epicurus never thought of dispensing with virtue, and in this I defend him and distinguish him from Aristippus; but neither did he ever think of giving to virtue an excellence which belongs to it; he made of it only a means of happiness.

You cannot dispense with virtue without incurring the contradictions and miseries of pleasure; the care of your personal utility imposes virtue upon you. Social morality, like private morality, is founded only on utility.\* Society is a contract. It

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\* Diog. L., x. 150.

is sustained only because the two contracting parties observe the contract. And why do they observe it? Because they have an interest in observing it. Would you object to Epicurus, that in many cases, one of the contracting parties, has an interest in not observing the contract? He would reply that if one of the contracting parties considers merely the pleasure of the moment, the immediate advantage, he will violate the contract; but if he considers the future, he will see that in many more cases he should observe than violate the contract, and hence makes a momentary sacrifice for the sake of his interest, so that personal interest would still teach virtue. This is well answered, but yet not well enough. Truly if we admit a future and ulterior chance; but what if we admit no future and if it be necessary to violate the contract or perish? Place whom you will between a duty and death;\* what is then the future? what are the reserved chances? what is the basis of the calculation of personal interest? There is no other life, and death is present; no future of any kind, neither in this world, nor in the other; it would be necessary either to violate the contract or to be totally destroyed. If then for observing or violating the contract you have no other rule than your utility, either in the present or in the future, it is clear that then you will legitimately violate the contract. Such is natural right, such is the social morality of Epicurus. It not only overthrows society which it places at the mercy of a bad calculation, but it destroys it in still another way. Epicurus derives less happiness from the disquiet enjoyment of positive pleasures than from the possession of that almost negative pleasure, which is tranquillity of soul. But in entering into practical life, in contracting family ties, in becoming a husband and a father, man runs many risks, he compromises, singularly, the *ἡδονὴ κατὰ στοιχείαν*; still more does he compromise it, if he desires to be a citizen, a magistrate, a warrior, if he enters into public

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\* We have more than once taken this example, among others, Vol. 8, of this same Series, Lecture 20.

affairs. Epicurus concludes that we should guard against introducing trouble into the soul, by allowing in it a place for domestic affections, or for patriotism, which is still more dangerous; and Epicureanism resolves itself into a perfect egotism adorned by the beautiful name of impassibility, *ἀπαρξία*. Having set out from sensation, it arrives first at materialism and at atheism, finally in morality at absolute egotism, both public and private; an egotism which if it is consistent, and if the soul has energy, would arrive legitimately, as we have seen, at iniquity and crime, but which ordinarily limits itself by mere indifference to others, when tempered by that good dose of inconsistency which man, thank God, almost always prescribes for philosophy.

Epicureanism is the last development of Greek sensualism; it places upon the stage of the general history of philosophy, the Indian sensualism of Kapila, and I need not ask you to observe how much it surpasses it in extent, in rigor and in clearness.

Stoicism is precisely the opposite of Epicureanism, with which it forms a perfect contrast. For Stoicism, as well as for Epicureanism, morality is philosophy *par excellence*;\* every thing in it is directed towards morality. Like Epicureanism, too, it admits physiology and logic as the introduction to morality; they are the physics and canons of Epicureanism; the names only a little changed.

Every thing commences with the phenomenon of sensation, *αἴσθησις*; this produces in the soul an image which corresponds with its exterior object and represents it, *φάντασμα*. By the side of sensibility, distinct without being separated from it, is thought, the faculty of general ideas, the *ὁρὸς λόγος*, τὸ λογιστικόν, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, right reason, as supreme power and director of human nature. Even as in the understanding there are two elements, so in the world there are also two elements, a passive

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\* The Stoics compare philosophy to a garden: Logic is the inclosure, Physiology the ground and the trees, Morality the fruit. Diog. L., vii. 40.

element, matter, primitive matter, ὕλη πρώτη, and an active intelligent element—God. The intelligence of God applied to matter has placed in it the laws which govern it, the primitive reasons of things, λόγοι σπερματικοί; and God is the reason of the world, τοῦ παντός τὸν λόγον; the laws of the world are necessary as eternal reason; hence the destiny of the Stoics: but this destiny is only the application of God to the world;\* it supposes above it a Providence which it represents. In fact, if in the doctrine of Stoicism more than one distinct trace of sensualism and often of materialism† is found, it is impossible to mistake in it, in all epochs, in the hymn to God of Cleanthus, and in Epictetus, and in Marcus Aurelius an unequivocal theism, although sometimes it is produced under the form of Pantheism. If God exists, and if he is in the world by the laws which he has placed in it, this world, at least in its form and in its ordinance, is well made, is beautiful, is immortal, is reasonable, and it must be conformed to its laws as to those of reason and of God.

Since reason is the foundation of humanity, of nature, of God himself, it follows that the practical law *par excellence*, is to live conformably to reason. Among authors we often find this formula: To live conformably to nature. But by this is meant either the nature of the world, which is reason, or the nature of man, which is also reason, so that all comes back to reason, ζῆν ὁμολογουμένως λόγῳ. This is the fundamental axiom of Stoic morality. Behold now the series of consequences derived from this maxim. If the only rule of actions is that of being conformed to reason, all actions, whatever they may be, are divided into two classes only: on the one hand those which are conformed to reason, on the other those which are not conformed to it, καθήκοντα, παρὰ τὸ καθήκον. And again, if reason is the whole man, it is con-

\* 'Ἐστὶ δὲ εἰσαρμένη τῶν ὅλων αἰτία εἰρημένη ἢ λόγος καθ' ὃν ὁ κόσμος διαφέρεται. Diog. L., vii. 149.

† "Ὅντα μὲν τὰ σώματα καλοῦσιν. Plutarch *against the Stoics*, 80. Seneca, Letter cvi. "Quæ corporis bona sunt, corpora sunt, ergo et quæ animi sunt; nam et hic corpus est."

formity of our actions to reason, which is the only and ultimate end of all our actions, the only end of man; that is therefore the sovereign good for man, for the sovereign good of a being is what is conformed to the law and to the end of that being, that is, to his nature. Thus the sovereign good, *εὐδαιμονία*, is the conformity of man's actions to reason; evil is the non-conformity of actions to reason: therein is evil, there is no other. Pain and pleasure being neither conformed nor non-conformed to reason, are neither good nor bad; there is in them neither good nor evil, and the physical consequences of actions are as if they did not exist. This must have conducted and has conducted Stoicism to a jurisprudence entirely opposed to Epicurean jurisprudence. If we must do what is good, that is, what is reasonable, without regard to the consequences, it is not for the utility, which results from it or which does not result from it, that justice should be practised, but for the excellence which is in itself. Justice is good, not by the law of men, but by its own nature, *φύσει, οὐ νόμῳ*. Behold the beautiful part of Stoicism. It remains for us to follow it from error to error.

The first aberration. All actions are conformed or not conformed to reason; all actions that are conformed to reason, have the common characteristic of being conformed to reason; they are then equal, one to another in this abstraction of their conformity to reason: hence the equality of all good actions. All bad actions have also the common characteristic of being non-conformed to reason; they are then equal to each other in the abstraction of their non-conformity to reason: hence among some Stoics this ridiculous paradox, that all bad actions are equal to each other; that thus falsehood and murder are equally bad, since they are both bad.

Another aberration. Reason is the whole of man; conformity to reason is the only rule of action, and the moral character of actions is the only measure of good and of evil in general. Now the greatest good is the greatest happiness; then the virtuous man is the most happy: and if in happiness is comprehended

liberty, beauty, riches, etc., it must be confessed that he who is conformed to reason is free, beautiful, rich, etc.

Another aberration, which belongs to what is greatest in Stoicism, What prevents man from conforming always to reason? passion. Passion, then, is the enemy which it behooves us to combat. Admirable indeed. Hence courage, moral energy, magnanimity, constancy; so well expressed in the Stoic school by the manly precept 'Ἀνέχου, *Sustine*, "Support." Support the sorrows engendered by the bitter struggle between the passions; support all the evils which fortune shall send thee: calumny, betrayal, poverty, exile, irons, death itself. Such a maxim cannot be too much applauded. But it should be followed by this: Act, be useful to thy fellow-beings;\* combat, not only thy own passions, but combat also the passions of others, which are an obstacle to the establishment of reason in this world, and which disturb the moral order of human society. But in this struggle, we may fail in more than one way; and to meet peril, is not only to compromise peace of mind, but its interior purity; and to the admirable maxim 'Ἀνέχου, "Support," Stoicism adds the maxim 'Ἀπέχεου, "Abstain," excellent again in certain limits, deplorable when it is too much extended. Stoicism has carried it even to apathy. It is not the struggle against the passions, it is their entire destruction which it recommends; forgetting that in extinguishing the flame, its source is destroyed, that is, the principle of action, the principle of all moral energy, the principle which can alone put man in conformity with reason and in relation with God. Stoic morality, strictly speaking, is at bottom only a slavish morality, excellent in Epictetus, admirable still, but useless to the world in Marcus Aurelius. Stoicism is essentially solitary: it is the exclusive care of one's own soul without regard to that of others; and as the only important thing

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\* On the importance, the grandeur, and the peril of the principle of Charity, see especially 1st Series, and particularly Vol. 2, Lectures 21 and 22, p. 832.



is purity of soul, when this purity is too much in peril, when one despairs of being victorious in the struggle, it may be terminated as Cato terminated it, *αὐτοχρησία*. Thus philosophy is only an apprenticeship of death and not of life ; it tends to death by its image, apathy and ataraxy, *ἀραξία καὶ ἀπαρξία*, and is definitely resolved into a sublime egotism. You see that it is precisely the counterpart of Epicureanism.

Epicureanism and Stoicism, born nearly\* together, have been developed with one another and by one another. Their ardent struggle closed only about a century before the Christian era. It was in this condition that Greek philosophy passed into Rome, where, cultivated without any speculative originality, but carried to all its extremes in practice by energetic minds, it produced the gross sensualism which dishonored the fall of the Empire, with some sallies of far-fetched and sterile virtue. I ask if it was possible that the human mind should stop at one or the other of these two doctrines ; I ask if it was possible that skepticism should not have gone forth from the midst of the struggle which they produced ? Yes, it did proceed from it, and on all sides. It went forth, first from idealism ; thence to the new Academy.

\* Epicurus was born 337 years B. C. ; Zeno, 340 years B. C.

*List of the Epicureans.*

Metrodorus,  
Timocrates,  
Colotes,  
Polyænus,  
Hermachus, flor. 270 years B. C.  
Polystratus,  
Dionysius,  
Basilides,  
Apollodorus,  
Zeno of Sidon,  
Diogenes of Tarsus,  
Diogenes of Selucia,  
Phedrus, and  
Philodemus of Gadara.

*List of the Stoics.*

Cleanthus, flor. 264 years B. C.  
Chrysippus, died in 208 "  
Zeno of Tarsus, flor. 212 "  
Antipater, " 146 "  
Panætius, " 115 "  
Possidonius, died 50 "  
Seneca, died 56 A. D.  
Cornutus and  
Nusonius, exiled 66 "  
Epictetus, flor. 90 "  
Arien, " 184 "  
Marcus Anralius, 161 "

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The new Academy is, in fact, skeptical; but how is it so? It deduced the Platonic Academy entirely opposed to skepticism. At first it had received the irony of Socrates, that is, the habit of doubt and unlimited examination. Afterwards it was engaged in a very lively contest against the exclusive system of Aristotle and Zeno, and it exceeded itself. Thus apparently was formed the new character which the new Academy presents. As the opinion of the new Academy, dogmatism was at the foundation, it took care not to go to the last extremity of skepticism, which had ruined even Platonism. Arcesilas is contented to combat vigorously the dogmatism of the Stoics; he combats, for example, the stoic maxim that the image (*φαντασμα*) which originates from sensation is conformed to its object: a contest since then renewed, both by Carneades, who made of it one of the bases of academic skepticism, and in modern philosophy by Berkeley, Hume, and the Scotch school. He recommends, in the manner of Socrates, as the principle of all philosophy. Carneades, one of the most skilful men of the new Academy, exhausted all his strength against Chrysippus. He said: "If Chrysippus had not been born, there would have

reanism and Stoicism), and finishes also by giving his advice (dogmatical conclusion of skepticism).\*

But it was reserved for sensualism to produce true skepticism; and it must be remarked, that in general we have seen, thus far, skepticism attaching itself directly or indirectly to empiricism. A century before the Christian era, from a school of natural philosophers and physicians, and empiric physicians, went forth a new skepticism with Ænesidemus. Meanwhile dogmatism is so rooted in the mind of man, that Ænesidemus himself, if we may believe his most illustrious disciple,† placed skepticism in advance only in a dogmatic intention, as Arcesilaus had done; but it was not idealism which he wished to favor, it was the physics of Heraclitus. It cannot be denied that Ænesidemus, whatever may have been the secret and ultimate aim of his skepticism, developed it more powerfully than Arcesilaus; he, truly, constituted it; he made of it a school, which has since had its fixed principles, its method, its history. He composed a commentary, unfortunately lost, on skeptic tradition, and particularly on Pyrrho. You properly conclude that in his polemics he mismanaged the notion of cause, the perpetual object of the attacks of skepticism and the rock upon which it is ordinarily cast.‡

After Ænesidemus, the most distinguished personage of the skeptic school was the physician Agrippa; he reduced the ten ordinary arguments of this school to five, which represent all the

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\* Stob., Eclog., ii. 40.

*List of the Philosophers of the new Academy.*

Arcesilaus, born 316, died 239 B. C.

Lacydes.

Evander and Telecles, of Phocis.

Hegesinus of Pergama.

Carneades of Cyrene, born about 215, died 129.

Clitomachus of Carthage, flor. 129.

Philo of Larissa, flor. about 106.

Antiochus of Ascalon, died 69.

† Sext., Hyp. Pyrrh., i. 29.

‡ Photius, Library No. 212; Sextus Hyp. Pyrrh., ii. 17, etc.

others. The arguments are these: 1st, Discordance of opinions; 2d, The indefinite necessity of every proof being itself proved; 3d, The relative character of all our ideas; 4th, The hypothetical character of all systems; 5th, The vicious circle to which philosophical demonstration is almost always condemned. The last and most considerable interpreter of the skeptical school is Sextus, an empiric physician, hence called Sextus Empiricus. It is fortunate that the monument which he erected to skepticism has escaped the ravages of time. We possess it entire. It embraces a system of universal and consistent skepticism. Sextus combats sensualism as well as idealism, and by their opposition destroys one by the other. The fundamental process of skepticism, according to him, consists in setting sensible ideas and conceptions of the mind at variance, in order, thereby, to arrive at an absolute suspension of all judgment. And that is only the theoretical aim of skepticism: its practical aim is ataraxy, impassibility; and the favorite maxim of Sextus was: Neither this nor that, one not more than the other: Οὐδὲν μᾶλλον.\*

After so much agitation, skepticism condemned the human mind to ataraxy, to absolute suspension of all judgment, to immobility. I ask if the human mind could be resigned to this? It was proposing non-existence; for, to the mind, existence is action, judgment, thought, and consequently belief. The need of thought and of belief subsisted then in the human mind; it simply demanded a new form. And what form could it assume? It was not sensualism, for stoicism had decried it; it was not practical idealism, stoicism, for Epicureanism had in turn decried that, and skepticism had ruined both, and at the same time ruined itself. Hence the necessity of an attempt entirely new,

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\* *List of Skeptics of the Empiric School.*

Ænesidemus of Crete, 80 years B. C.

Favorinus of Arles, in Gaul.

Agrippa.

Menodotus of Nicomedia.

Sextus of Mitylene, two centuries A. C.

for the human mind could trust alone to a means of understanding which skepticism had not yet attacked. It was necessary to abandon the search of truth in the more or less learned and ingenious combination of sensible data and ideas produced by abstraction. The character of all these processes, until then employed, was to lead, by degrees, to truth; and all having been proved powerless, it was necessary to examine whether there was not, in the intelligence, a force until then unknown, or too much neglected, which, without depending on abstraction, so often dissipated in reveries, or on empiricism, which holds us within an inferior and limited sphere, attains directly to truth, not to relative truth, but to absolute truth, and not only to abstract truth, but to the real principle of all truth, to its absolute principle, that is, to God. The only means of knowledge, then, left to the human mind, was mysticism. Mysticism is the last resource of human reason, the direct elevation of the mind to God, not by reason, nor by the senses, but by an immediate intuition. The history of Greek philosophy should have had, and did have, an illustrious final moment, that of religious philosophy. Its first epoch under Pythagoras and under the Ionians, had been consecrated to natural philosophy; its second, under Aristotle and Plato, had been filled by a philosophy which, without forgetting the universe and God, had especially a human and moral character; the third and last epoch was that of religious philosophy. Thus the three great epochs of Greek philosophy run over and illumine the three great objects of science: nature, man, God.

The reason of the religious character of the third and last epoch of Greek philosophy was in the interior movement, in the necessary progress of this philosophy. To this fundamental cause were joined exterior causes, to which I will but briefly call your attention. Bear this in mind; we are in the second century of the Christian era: and where, at that time, was the world? where was society? where was literature? where was art? where was all ancient civilization? Greek liberty was hopelessly at an end; the Roman power almost accomplished, was already

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ring itself, and, leaving the mind without any great practical interest, delivered it up to the mercy of all the caprices of an egotism. Hence, in a great measure, the baseness of Epicurism; in a few solitary instances the sublime folly of stoicism; in the arts, the absence of all true grandeur and of all simplicity; everywhere the want of new emotions, everywhere infinite refinement: such was the world in the second century of the Christian era. There was no longer any thing great to do, and the asylum for the soul was the invisible world: it was very easy then to abandon the earth for heaven, and such society the communion of God.

On all sides sects and schools began to appear whose ruling character was religious, and whose processes were no longer abstraction, nor analysis, but inspiration, enthusiasm, illumination. I mean the cabal of the Jews\* and gnosticism.† But I hasten to such a system which represents the regular and scientific mysticism of this epoch, I mean the school of Alexandria.

Among all the exterior circumstances which introduced mysticism into philosophy, the first doubtless was the contact of Greece with the East. That which rules in the East is the religious sen-

noble attempt at reconciliation to degenerate into a deplorable confusion. Truly they may be reproached with this; and with more reason a contrary reproach may be cast upon them. Placed between Africa, Asia, and Europe, Alexandria wished to unite the Oriental and the Greek spirit; but in this fusion it was the Oriental spirit that prevailed. It wished to unite religion and philosophy, but it was religion that ruled. It wished to unite all the parts of Greek philosophy, but it was Plato that ruled, often indeed Pythagoras. Of the three systems into which we have seen the Greek philosophy resolve itself, sensualism, idealism, skepticism, the school of Alexandria will not certainly be accused of having taken too great a part in skepticism. But where there is not a certain portion of skepticism, there is no true eclecticism, and hence an immoderate dogmatism can alone result. Sensualism and idealism remained. Will you accuse the school of Alexandria of having accorded too much to sensualism? it left nothing to it. Idealism then remained alone. But a school which is condemned to a single philosophical element is forced to exaggerate it in order to draw from it philosophy entire; and the exclusive idealism of the school of Alexandria soon drew it into all the follies of mysticism. Mysticism is the true character of the school of Alexandria, it is that which gives it an elevated and original rank in the history of philosophy. If time does not permit me to develop at much length Alexandrian mysticism,\* I will at least try to present you, with some precision, its essential features, its principles, and some of its consequences.

Since the Alexandrian school is a school of mysticism, that which plays the principal part in it is the theodicea. The philosophy of Alexandria did not make a theodicea for its psychology, but it made its psychology for its theodicea. Its aim was

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\* We have already encountered and have tried to make known the Alexandrian Mysticism, 1st Series, Vol. 2, Lectures 9 and 10, *du Mysticisme*, pp. 109-118.

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religious aim: the heart of its philosophy must then have been in fact a theodicea. Let us see what the theodicea of the school of Alexandria is.

It cannot be expected that the most penetrating mind can, in the first place, and at the beginning of philosophical studies, fathom the depths of the Alexandrian theodicea and judge it by thorough acquaintance. Long study is necessary in order to appreciate its merits, and still longer, in order to discover its vices, for it has many small and great ones. This theodicea is profound, but not entirely so.

According to the Alexandrians, the universal principle of all things, God, is absolute unity, unity without any mixture, without any division. But absolute unity, in so far as absolute, is a unity which can have no attributes, no qualities, no modifications, for these would divide it. What! have we returned to the unity of Parmenides, to the Eleatic unity, to that abstract unity, without attributes and without qualities, which becomes indifferent to the spiritual substance of the human soul and the subject of the possible modifications of matter, of a clod of earth, as



second degree, in the second point of view, the attribute of intelligence. He possesses still another: he must be conceived as having in himself activity and power, that power, that activity which is activity, the creative power. Behold the Alexandrian trinity, God in himself, God as intelligence, God as power. What is wanting in this theodicea is not easily seen; nevertheless it contains within it a fundamental error.

God knows himself only in taking himself as the object of his own knowledge; and intelligence introduces duality into divine unity, the necessary condition of thought, the essential character of consciousness. Either it is necessary to be resigned to a God without consciousness, or consent to duality in primitive unity. Still farther: God is not an abstract power, but an effective power, he acts, he produces, and he produces without end; power, then, introduces into him who possesses it and exercises it an indefinite multiplicity. But the god of Alexandria had been set forth, at first, as absolute unity. When, then, the philosophy of Alexandria, sagely adds to him intelligence and power, it adds duality and multiplicity to unity. Now, the school of Alexandria pretends that multiplicity, diversity, and duality which begins diversity, is inferior to absolute unity; whence it follows, that God, as absolute unity, is superior to God as intelligence and power; whence it follows in general that power and action, intelligence and thought, are inferior to absolute unity. Herein is the principle which in its consequences has destroyed the school of Alexandria. No, it is not true that unity is superior to duality and multiplicity, when multiplicity and duality proceed from unity and are attached to it. For what are duality and multiplicity produced by unity, except the manifestation of unity? A unity not developed in duality and multiplicity would be merely an abstract unity. Either a unity is merely abstract, and is as if it did not exist; or it is real and living, and carries with it duality and multiplicity. Variety proceeds from true unity; it does not destroy it, it manifests it. But in order to arrive at this conception of divine unity,

philosophy needed Christianity, seventeen centuries and Leibnitz.\*

The psychology of the Alexandrians is appropriated to their metaphysics. The Alexandrians admit different degrees in the theory of human knowledge: 1st, knowledge which results from sensation; 2d, knowledge of the operations of the soul; 3d, that which is given by the employment of analysis and synthesis; 4th, knowledge of first truths, of principles, knowledge which belongs to the intelligence in its highest degree; 5th, finally an operation which in psychology and in the soul is what absolute unity, placed above intelligence and power, is in the theodicea and in God: to wit, the capacity of the soul to elevate itself above action and intelligence. But how is it elevated above intelligence? Intelligence reduced to its most simple expression contains a duality in the soul as in God. How, then, can we set out from intelligence, that is, from duality? It is done by what the Alexandrians call simplification, ἀπλῶσις, that is, reduction of the soul to a mere unity. And what is the operation by which we arrive at this simplification, at this reduction of the soul to unity? Ecstasy. The word comes from the Alexandrians, because the theory was for the first time regularly constituted and elevated to the authority of a philosophical theory in the school of Alexandria. It is among the writers of this school that one must and can, for the first time, read a physiological description of the phenomena of ecstasy.†

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\* See Vol. 1st of this Series, *Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, Lecture 5.

† On the five degrees of knowledge in Alexandrian psychology, see a decisive passage from the treatise of Proclus de *Providentia et Fato, et eo quod in nobis*, in our edition, Vol. 1st, pp. 37-42. The following is the description of the fifth degree of knowledge in the bad Latin of the Archbishop of Corinth, William of Morbek:

“Quintam etiam post has omnes cognitiones intelligentiam volo te accipere, qui credidisti Aristoteli quidem usque ad intellectum operationem sursum ducenti, ultra hanc autem nihil insinuant; assequentem autem Platoni et ante Platonem theologis qui consueverunt nobis laudare cognitionem supra intellectum, et *μυστα*, ut vere hanc divinam divulgant. Ipsum aiunt *ιμματα*

Such is the psychology of the Alexandrians ; it proceeds from their theodicea, and is connected with their ultimate aim, which, as I have told you, is a religious aim. Religion is the union of man with God ; the union of man with God is made by the greatest resemblance of man to God ; now, in the school of Alexandria, God being conceived as absolute unity, man can resemble him only on condition of making himself absolutely one. Plato had profoundly said that man must resemble God, and that he resembles him in the utmost degree, by ideas, by thought, and by virtuous action, conformed to the idea of good ; for the God of Plato is the substance of ideas, λόγος θεῖος. Behold an intelligent God ; Platonic morality also, although too contemplative, recommends, notwithstanding, action and science ; but instead of the God of Plato, of whom ideas are the attribute, the school of Alexandria sets forth a God whose type is absolute unity, hence a morality and a religion entirely different, a morality and a religion both ascetic. Plato had proposed the resemblance of man to God ; this, seemingly, was enough ; the school of Alexandria proposes the unification of man with God, ἐνωσις, that is, the suppression of humanity ; for if man, in trying to resemble God, raises himself above the ordinary conditions of existence, he can unite himself with God only by being absorbed in him, and by destroying himself.

Mysticism having once arrived at this point, it is easy to see into what errors it will fall. Doubtless in the first age of the school of Alexandria, the learned and religious men which it

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animæ. . . . Omnia enim simili cognoscuntur, sensibile sensu, scibile scientia, intelligibile intellectu, unum uniali. Intelligens quidem etiam anima et se ipsam cognoscit et quæcumque intelligit. . . . Super intelligens autem et se ipsam ignorat, quo adjacens *τὸ* unum, quietem amat clausa cognitionibus, muta facta et silens intrinseco silentio. . . . Fiat igitur unum ut videat *τὸ* unum, magis autem ut non videat. Videns enim, intellectuale videbit et non supra intellectum, et quoddam unum intelliget et non *αὐτὸ τὸ* unum. Hanc, o amice, divinissimam Entis operationem animæ aliquis operans, soli credens sibi ipsi, scilicet flori intellectus, et quietans seipsum non ab exterioribus motibus sed ab inferioribus, Deus factus. . . .”

produced, Plotinus and Porphyry, preserved themselves from extravagance. At the same time we must not forget that Porphyry pretends, in the life of Plotinus, that his master was once honored with a view of God. At least in Porphyry and in Plotinus there is no trace of theurgy and magic. It is not so among the ordinary Alexandrians. Jamblichus precipitates mysticism into theurgy; he performs conjurations and miracles. Open Eunapius, or, if you please, read the faithful extract which I have given,\* and you will find the school of Alexandria plunged into divination, into asceticism, and into acts of theurgy, that is, mysterious ceremonies agreeable to God, by virtue of which one obtains power over nature. Do you wish to see mysticism in action? take Julian. Julian is the hero of mysticism; he is nothing else than a scholar of Alexandria become an emperor; he is the school of Alexandria on the throne. Julian has all the prejudices of his masters with the energy necessary to show what Alexandrian mysticism could do, or rather what it could not do. He yielded, and with him closed the brilliant part of the school of Alexandria. Before being extinguished, it was reanimated for a moment in Proclus, who was its last and greatest representative. Proclus was a mind of the first order; he was the most distinguished geometrician and astronomer of his times; he had all the science of Hipparchus and Ptolemæus. He left commentaries on Euclid and on Ptolemæus which have been considered as the ultimatum of ancient mathematics. He was also a man of vast erudition, and possessed a profound knowledge of all religions, which he honored so far as to call himself a sort of universal priest, a hierophant of the entire world, τοῦ ὅλου κόσμου ἱεροφάντην.† Without speaking of his depth as a metaphysician, I am eager to tell you that he was a very pure moralist; I seize this occasion to assure you that after having much read the Alexandrians, I have never detected an equivocal moral maxim; and

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\* *Fragments philosophiques, Philosophie ancienne*, p. 182.

† *Marinus, Vie de Proclus*, edition of M. Boissonade.

it must be remarked that the mysticism of Alexandria has escaped the moral or rather immoral extravagances which I have pointed out to you in the Bhagavad-Gita.\* Proclus is a severe moralist like the school to which he belongs; but the virtue which he recommends, and which he practices, is not of this world. According to the doctrine of his school, he divides virtues into two classes; those of one class are what he calls political virtues, *πολιτικαί*, that is, the virtues in practice in this world, subaltern virtues, which are but the first degree of virtue according to the Alexandrians. True virtue is sanctifying and purifying virtue, *θελαστική*, that is, religious virtue; it is holiness substituted for virtue. I would willingly call Proclus, with his superior talent for analysis, and his vast knowledge, the Aristotle of Alexandrian mysticism. And do you know in what this Aristotle of mysticism ended? in mystic hymns colored with a profound melancholy, in which it may be seen that he despairs of the world, abandons it to the barbarians and to a new religion, takes refuge for a moment in venerable antiquity, before losing himself forever in the bosom of eternal unity, the supreme object of his efforts and of his thoughts.

With Proclus the school of Alexandria ended. The victims of fierce retaliation, and of an obstinate persecution, these poor Alexandrians, after having sought an asylum in their dear East, at the court of Chosroes,† returned to Europe, were dispersed over the face of the earth, and the most part extinguished in the deserts of Egypt, which were converted for them into a philosophic Thebais.

We have arrived at the close of Greek philosophy. Sensualism and idealism were exhausted, consumed; skepticism had destroyed them, destroyed itself, and had left no other resource than mysticism. Now, we have established it, there were no other philosophical systems possible than those; then with Alexandrian mysticism, Greek philosophy must have ended and did end. At

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\* See Lecture 6.

† Suidas, v., *αποστροφής*.

Alexandria, thus to speak, was its death-bed: it expired hopelessly in the sixth century. In order that a philosophical movement may recommence, there must go forth from the midst of the great revolution, which swept away Greek and Roman antiquity, a new world, which may produce little by little a new philosophy. Modern civilization must engender modern philosophy. I will next conduct you into these new regions.

## GUIZOT'S HISTORICAL WORKS.

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